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FEBRUARY & MARCH 2003, NO. 117, $6.00

THE CHILD-FAT PROBLEM
MARY EBERSTADT

THE PLACE OF GOVERNMENT
SEBASTIAN MALLABY

WHAT IS "MULTILATERAL"?
JOHN VAN OUDENAREN

FROM SARAJEVO TO SEPTEMBER 11
JOHN MICKLETHWAIT AND
ADRIAN WOOLDRIDGE

ALSO: ESSAYS AND REVIEWS BY
D.M. GORMAN, STEVEN MENASHI,
ELI LEHRER, AND ROSS DOUTHAT

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The Child-Fat Problem

By MARY EBERSTADT

JUST THREE MONTHS ago, a major study published in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* confirmed what any American with eyes even half-open could already have reported — that not only our adults, but also our children, are fat and getting fatter all the time. As the Department of Health and Human Services put it in a summary of this latest study's evidence, "Among children and teens ages 6 to 19, 15 percent (almost 9 million) are overweight according to the 1999-2000 data, or triple what the proportion was in 1980."

The widespread media attention given to this bad-news story would appear to be justified, for the JAMA study followed at least two other blue-chip examinations during the past year or so of the underage fat explosion. One of these, a report on the whopping economic costs of child and adolescent obesity, was published in *Pediatrics* magazine by researchers for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC). The other publication was a less prominent but also intriguing report in the May issue of the *Journal of Nutrition*

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written by researchers at the University of North Carolina. This one emphasized one of the lesser-known aspects of the fat problem — that "adolescent obesity increases significantly among second- and third-generation immigrants to the United States," in the words of a UNC press release.

This is not to say that underage corpulence is unique to Americans and their offspring — far from it. Misconceptions and undeserved reputations to the contrary, most other advanced countries (and for that matter, a number of not-so-advanced ones) do indeed share in the child-fat-and-obesity problem, for the most part differing from us in degree rather than kind. In England, reported the *Guardian* earlier this year, "Adult obesity rates have tripled and those in children have doubled since 1982." In Canada, says the *Globe and Mail*, also in 2002, "More than a third of Canadian children aged 2 to 11 are overweight, and half that number are obese, according to newly published Statistics Canada data." Moreover, "Canada now has more fat children than fat adults." As for Australia, a 2000 study there found that children of either sex were twice as likely to be defined as overweight in 2000 as in 1985.

There is no denying that the world's sole remaining superpower is also its most supersized.

Nor is the Anglo-speaking world the only one with a child-fat problem. Its svelte reputation quite aside, for example, continental Europe and its children are ballooning as well. In Italy, report researchers for the *Bollettino Epidemiologico Nazionale*, "Neapolitan children were more at risk of obesity than were children from France, Holland, the United States, and also than children living in Milan in northern Italy," while in the province of Benevento, "The prevalence of overweight and obesity was greater . . . than in England, Scotland, and the United States." In Germany, according to researchers in the *International Journal of Obesity*, a "large study on all children entering school in Bavaria in 1997 shows patterns of overweight and obesity which are comparable with other European data" (though still "lower than US and Australian data"). Even vaunted France, if the French National Institute of Health and Medical Research is to be believed, admits an obesity problem among 10-year-olds of "epidemic proportions." "The number of seriously overweight children in France," reports the same institute, "has more than doubled since the 1980's."

Yet even granting the ambiguous relief of knowing that we are not the only giants pounding the earth, there is still no denying that the world's sole remaining superpower is also its most supersized. We Americans are remarkably catholic in this fat problem of ours — and, the nod to egalitarianism aside, our universalism here works to just about everyone's detriment. The fact that we fatten up even our immigrants, several subsets of whom are measurably bigger here than are counterparts in their home countries, means that we are virtually guaranteed a steadily growing quotient of bigger and

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bigger people, with an unhealthy degree of heaviness becoming ever more the unremarkable norm.

In fact, exactly that sort of necessity-driven renorming is already on display ubiquitously. Witness the explosion of "husky" sizes in children's clothes. Witness the popularity of "hip-hop" styles among adolescents of all races — a form of bodily tent more akin to, say, the burka than to traditional Western couture. Look too to the famously enlarged portions of every processed thing one can imagine ingesting or imbibing, and the ever-larger cup-holders and the ever-larger cups to put in them — even those ever-larger vehicles designed to comfortably transport our ever-numerically-smaller families. And let us not forget, either, just to round out the class participation in all this, the enduring appeal of such middle- and upper-class sartorial favorites as fleece and spandex and velour and washable silk — all of which, whatever their other virtues, have more "give" than the traditional cotton and wool.

Maybe Americans are not wallowing zombie-like to the trough because Colonel Sanders tells them to.

Of course the fast food industry, as a recent lawsuit against McDonald's indicates, is everyone's favorite scapegoat answer to the question of how we got this way. Corporate America is also the culprit in a recent book by Greg Critser called *Fat Land: How Americans Became the Fattest People in the World* (Houghton Mifflin, 2003). But it is at least as reasonable to suppose that the opposite is true — that fast-food franchises and the like are responding to demand rather than creating it. Maybe Americans are not in fact wallowing zombie-like to the trough because Colonel Sanders tells them to. Maybe fast-food and other companies unable to ignore our capacious appetites are just engaged in business as usual: trying to keep the customers — with apologies — fat and happy.

Thus, for a host of reasons, will something like the corpulent continue to be with us. On the other hand, as the analogous case of tobacco smoking would appear to suggest, the stigmatization and eventual diminishing of fat are hardly impossible; indeed, both would appear to be already underway, led as before by near-unanimity among medical and other experts. As with smoking, however, such a massive change in entrenched personal habits will not come easily or quickly. More likely, it will take several generations, numerous surgeons general, a great many lawsuits, and plenty of personal backsliding along the way. Still, anyone who has ever wondered what a spittoon was for is a case in point of how the stigmatization of human behaviors ebbs and flows. The longer-term question, one would bet, is not *whether* Americans of future generations will be tipping the scales more to their doctors' satisfaction, but *when*.

If free-choosing adults were the only people implicated thus, we could

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perhaps rest philosophical here, content in the knowledge that the fat problem — again, like smoking — will ultimately right or at least ameliorate itself in the long run. The problem, however, as the latest round of headlines demonstrates, is that the casualty count goes beyond those with free choice. For there *is* something uniquely worrisome, both as a public health issue and as a social fact, in one important subset of that problem — namely, the cavalcade of new evidence about obese and overweight children.

Child fat, though obviously related to adult fat in a variety of debated ways, is nevertheless a different order of problem — as experts already agree and the public is only beginning to recognize. The many American adults who might arguably be said to weigh more than they "ought" are one thing. (For the best and wittiest recent review of current thinking on that subject, see Rhoda Rabkin's essay, "Fatter Than Ever," in *Policy Review* 106, April-May 2001.) As one of many risky behaviors in which adults manifestly take pleasure, overeating — like, say, drinking, smoking, drug-taking, and promiscuous sex — will have certain adverse consequences; these consequences will vary in seriousness according to how often and how long the risky behavior has been going on; and adults, though they may injure themselves by any and all of the above, are by common near-consensus qualified to make their own decisions about self-inflicted risks and injuries (subject to a certain measure of hectoring from others).

The problem of adult corpulence is one that much of the rest of humanity would like to have.

In fact, a compelling case can be made that of all the above-listed personal behaviors prone to abuse, adult fat is *least* injurious to the greater public good — even given the issue of its medical costs, which are surely more than offset by the fantastically successful diet and fitness industries which naturally exploit the problem. Excess weight, in and of itself, does not cause traffic accidents, wreck marriages, impair moral and social judgment, or cause upswings in communicable diseases. Moreover, one might bear in mind the fact that the "problem" of adult corpulence, while real, remains the sort of problem that much of the rest of humanity would like to have. "To be sure, obesity is a major health problem," as Stephen Moore put it recently on *National Review Online* (November 27, 2002). "But it is not nearly so problematic as the nutritional problem for most of mankind throughout the ages: chronic hunger and periodic famines." In sum, the fact that some half of American adults may be carrying around more pounds than their doctors think fit may not be what admirers mean by national greatness. But compared to a good many other social ills, adult fat would appear (except perhaps from the point of view of trial lawyers) more socially negligible.

No such rationales, however, can be applied to the case of child and ado-

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lescent fat. As the *New York Times* put it the day after Thanksgiving in an editorial clearly reflecting the gravity of the phenomenon, "the issue has serious long-term implications. For the first time, children are being diagnosed with weight-related chronic ailments that usually strike much later in life, including hypertension and diabetes." Poignant evidence of the same appears particularly in the CDC report mentioned earlier, which documents the dramatic increase in obesity-linked hospitalizations for children — the doubling of diabetes diagnoses, the fivefold rise in sleep apnea cases, and the tripling of gall bladder disease admissions, all during the past two decades. The European and other national reports mentioned earlier note the same phenomenon; that is, the appearance in even very young obese children of diseases and disorders hitherto thought limited to older adults. And though a handful of contrarians have stepped forward in the *Atlantic Monthly*, the *New Republic*, and elsewhere to deny that American supersizing is either problematic or new, the facts about youngsters in particular quite obviously point otherwise. It is one thing to see shirtless obese children paraded like circus freaks on the Maury Povich show and to think the problem a subset of trash TV. It is another to read accounts written by actual doctors of what is suffered on account of this trend — the children who are so heavy that they routinely wake in panic because their windpipes have temporarily closed up; the growing incidence not only of early heart trouble but of fat-linked cancers in children only years removed from babyhood; the experiments, some of them parlous, with drugs and surgeries of all kinds to counter the unprecedented medical woes of overweight children. Whatever else may be said about them, the public health issues raised by child fat are no media inventions.

The personal health of those children who are fat today is a continued and lifelong battle.

Moreover, even those children and teenagers who are merely heavy, rather than clinically obese, find their weight affecting them adversely in other ways — for example, by making exercise more arduous, and hence less likely. And there is also the troubling fact that fat children tend to grow up into fat adults. This means that the very personal health of those children who are fat today is a continued and lifelong battle.

There are other, extra-medical problems in store for such children as well. Less arresting from a public health perspective, but probably more so from the point of view of most actual children and teenagers, is the personal suffering endured by many overweight children. As if that suffering were not compelling enough in its own right, there are also longstanding and unanswered questions about possibly related problems: for example, the relationship later in life between the repeated drive to eat more than one ought and other forms of medically questionable oral compulsion, notably smoking and drinking.

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Thus, though a range of opinion on the subject of fat does still exist within society at large — with poorer, black and Hispanic subgroups generally least likely to see child fat as a serious problem — the opinion of actual medical experts is by contrast virtually unanimous. For a constellation of physical and psychological reasons, most now believe that child obesity is no longer "simply a cosmetic problem," in the words of CDC lead researcher Dr. William Dietz, but "a serious medical problem" in itself. And while the poorest children, here as elsewhere in this vale of tears, are more likely to be burdened with the child-fat problem than are the rich, even the best-off children are participating too in the long caloric march, as the growth charts and weight charts and the declining age of menarche across class and race prove beyond doubt. In short, to switch metaphors, a rising tide of fat is rocking all our social and economic boats.

The whys so far

NATURALLY ENOUGH, and as most people also know, considerable industry has gone into pinpointing exactly how we came to live so large. From sociological observations about the simultaneous explosion of American prosperity (we eat too much because we can) to more ideological anti-business analyses (we're fat because McDonald's rules our world), explanations of U.S. rotundity abound. Evolutionary biologists blame our survival-riveted "hardwiring"; dietitians, our meat-and-dairy intensive diet; advocates of breast-feeding, our reliance on the highly more caloric alternative of baby formula. Still other observers point naturally to the greatly diminished physicality of American life: the fact that vehicles rather than feet get most people where they want to go, that recess and other run-around time has been curtailed in schools around the country, that sedentary pursuits of television and electronic games are climbing alongside those juvenile body-mass indices.

At the moment, the explanation that appears to enjoy most support in the popular mind is that of heredity. This idea — that kids gain weight because they are genetically programmed that way — appears to have two main virtues. One, it is consonant with a well-documented clinical (and easily observable) fact, which is that maternal heaviness is the single best predictor of child fat. Two, the argument from "programming" has the added advantage of being nonjudgmental about an issue uncomfortable and embarrassing to many people. If children cannot help being fat, after all, there is little they or their parents should feel badly about. (The fact that this line of thought is defeatist and passive, and thus exactly what kids themselves might least need to hear, has perhaps been insufficiently reflected upon.)

Despite its surface appeal and current popularity, however, the argument from heredity is seriously limited, for reasons familiar to researchers. In essence, genetic programming alone cannot explain the great leap forward

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into heaviness and obesity these past two or three decades. If people were truly "blueprinted" to gain weight, then the obesity problem would presumably have developed many years earlier, as soon as they had access to extra food. In other words, most Americans (and other moderns) have been prosperous enough, for a long enough time, that they could have eaten themselves to today's weights long ago; for some reason, however, they did not. As the lead author of yet another 2002 study — this one in the *Annals of Internal Medicine* — told a reporter, "People born in 1964 who became obese did so about 25 to 27 percent faster than those born in 1957." Heredity cannot explain facts like these.

To suggest that the genetic explanation of fat is overused, of course, is not to say that the problem is divorced from our chromosomal marching orders. Plainly, individuals metabolize calories and much else differently, as well as varying in age, height, sex, health, social class, fecundity, fertility, and many other dimensions of experience that affect whether and how much they gain weight. Just as plainly, however, heredity does not really "explain" our fat problem as thoroughly as many people commonly assume it does. Rather, on the emerging evidence, the conjecture about heredity — like theories that focus on processed food, lack of exercise, and so on — explains only part of it. To be sure, all of these explanations resonate with common sense; to reiterate, each captures a part of the truth.

Historically, either parents or family have controlled most of what and when children could eat.

The one part of that larger truth that no one has raced to discuss, however, is arguably the most important part of all. That question is not so much how children and adults get fat — on those issues, we are all experts now — but rather, why. By "why" I mean simply this: Historically, either parents or extended family or both have controlled most of what and when children could eat. The fact that this control was typically born of necessity — i.e., of making sure there was enough to go around — does not confute its significance. After all, this parental or familial power has been exercised virtually everywhere in human history, from the savannah to the igloo to the Raj and back again. And it has been exercised by rich as well as poor, else the history of better-off social classes would be replete with the oversized children and adults we see today (as it markedly is not). Thus, the why underlying the child-fat problem can be formulated something like this: Given that parents and related adults across history and cultures have policed their children's eating habits, in what kind of social universe do adults cease to perform that task? The answer, which is as obvious as it is unwelcome, is that our universe has become one in which adults, particularly related adults in the form of parents, are not around to do the policing in the first place. In other words, there would appear to be an obvi-

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ous relationship between absentee parents — meaning particularly, for reasons we will see, mothers — and overstuffed children.

Mothers at work

In all the volumes and bulletins and articles dedicated to the fat problem, there has apparently been only one serious American effort to examine that relationship head-on. This was an important paper published earlier this year by Patricia M. Anderson, Kristin F. Butcher, and Phillip B. Levine of the Joint Center for Poverty Research (funded by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services). Titled "Maternal Employment and Overweight Children," their study uses data from 10,000 children participating in the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY), among other sources. Its authors set themselves the goal of "help[ing] to determine whether a causal relationship exists between maternal employment and childhood overweight." (Obviously anticipating the ideological fusillade likely to be trained on anyone who distinguishes between mothers and fathers in this regard, the authors explain that they focus on maternal, rather than paternal, employment for three reasons: because "it is mothers' labor supply that has changed dramatically over recent decades"; because, whether working outside the home or not, women do "still bear the bulk of responsibility for child rearing"; and because "data limitations in the analysis . . . only enable us to link the employment histories of mothers and children.")

The answer, according to the authors, is yes. In the arresting language of what they found, this study, "among the first to grapple with issues of causality," "presents robust evidence of a positive and significant impact of maternal work on the probability that a child is overweight." And while the percentages derived are not overwhelming — at one point, the authors show how increased maternal employment could "explain" 6 to 11 percent of the growth in childhood overweight — there is no underestimating the social dynamite of the strength of the relationship between the two. As the authors emphasized, their work showed not only correlation but a clear causal connection: that "the mechanism through which this [child weight gain] takes place is constraints on the mother's time; it is hours per week, not the number of weeks worked, that affects children's probability of overweight." Nor did the authors shy away from reporting a perhaps unexpected class twist here: "This effect is particularly evident for the children of white mothers, of mothers with more education, and of mothers of a high income level."

As Anderson, Butcher, and Levine also note, though their study on maternal employment is so far unique in American annals, other efforts to gauge the connection have indeed been undertaken. In particular, a 1999 study of obese Japanese three-year-olds outlined a similar causal chain, identifying "the mother's job" as the environmental factor contributing most to child

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obesity. That study aside, however — which anyway appears little known in the U.S. outside expert circles — not much attention has been paid to the maternal-absence question.

Even given the dimensions of the problem, as it were, such reticence on the part of other researchers is hardly surprising. Drawing attention to the connection between childhood fat and absent parents, especially absent mothers, is about as close to an ideologically thankless task as social science can get. Yet while "Maternal Employment" may be among the first to examine the link directly, it is not the only way of making the case for a connection between absent mothers and fat kids.

Watching and eating

NOTHING, FOR EXAMPLE, is as firmly established in the fat literature as the fact that television watching and overweight children go hand in hand. This phenomenon, which has been studied many times over, is pretty easily grasped: The more television a child watches, the more likely he is to get fat. As to the mechanism at work here, this too appears clear. For one thing, people — including children — eat more in front of the television than they do sitting at a table. For another, the way in which metabolism slows to almost sleep-like levels after enough time in front of the tube means that the food taken in is metabolized more slowly, hence in a more fat-friendly way, than would otherwise be the case.

So far, so agreed: The television is an excellent proxy for child fat. The larger question becomes, therefore, whether the absent-parent household is also one in which children are more likely to watch television or play video games than they are when parents are at home. Common sense, of course, fairly shouts that they will — i.e., that unattended children are less likely to govern and limit their use of such entertainment than are children with a parent on the physical premises. Yet surprisingly — or perhaps not, given the socially loaded nature of the inquiry — little direct research appears to have been applied to the specific question of whether children whose mothers are out when they come home watch more television or play more video games than those with a parent on the premises.

Nonetheless, intriguing pieces of other, indirect research on the question suggest that the answer here too is an unequivocal yes. For while little may have been written about the viewing habits of middle- and upper-middle-class American children (some of whose working parents take ideological exception to this sort of inquiry), at least some other expert thought has gone into the question of what lower-class parents who are absent from home during those same after-school hours can expect to result. And the evidence here comes from an unexpected source: welfare reform.

One might think, for example, as many probably do, that a couch potato is a couch potato is a couch potato. In other words, given the strength of the

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link between low income and television-watching, television-watching might appear to be a kind of domestic constant immune to other ongoing human activity (particularly, to whether the mother of the house was out working or not). But this prejudice turns out to be wrong. Or so at least is suggested by a major four-year post-welfare reform study in California whose results were published this year. What that study found, as the *San Francisco Chronicle* put it, was that "welfare reform's biggest effect on children is that they spend less time with their mothers and watch 22 more minutes of television [a day] on average." What makes this evidence even more credible is that the researchers — from Stanford, UC Berkeley, Columbia, and Yale — were not looking for such a result but uncovered it incidentally in the course of their survey of 700 women. That increase nonetheless effectively puts to rest any notion that television-viewing is some class-based constant unaffected by other domestic variables.[1]

Then again, how much social science do we need to tell us that when parents are away, kids will play? And they will particularly play at electronics. Again, to whose surprise? The screen in any color (and perhaps most especially the personal computer, that "pool of electronic wonders," in journalist Peter Hitchens's words) is a hypnotizing force. Of course children are more likely to turn it off if there is an adult around reminding them to do so. What could be more obvious, at a time when many adults need the same outside prodding in various forms — boss, co-workers, spouse, or children at home — to unplug from their own screens?

Breast milk as nature's prophylactic

ANOTHER INDIRECT WAY of establishing the causal link between heavy children and absent parents — in this case, by definition, absent mothers only — concerns an altogether different practice at odds with the paid marketplace: breast-feeding. One does not have to be a card-carrying member of La Leche League to understand why physicians everywhere support such efforts on behalf of feeding babies human milk as opposed to formula (indeed, the American Academy of Pediatrics now officially recommends breast-feeding for at least the first 12 months of life).

[1]Though studies on television-viewing would fill a small library by now, there is as yet scant literature on the question of related static entertainments — meaning video and computer games — on which many children now spend more time than they do watching TV. Whether children eat as much, more, or less while playing such games than they do while simply watching TV is not yet known (although anyone who doubts that they can eat and play simultaneously is underestimating juvenile dexterity). About the only generalization we can safely make so far is that the actual total of unsupervised time that gets suctioned into such passive and sedentary pursuits is plainly even higher than the television-watching statistics by themselves suggest.

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Over the years, a substantial body of evidence has developed to suggest not only that mother's milk in the first year of life confers immune and other protections for a variety of baby problems — that much has been known for decades — but that such feeding also apparently reduces the likelihood of obesity later in life.

Perhaps the most comprehensive recent instantiation of this relationship was an essay in the *Lancet* in June 2001 by several researchers based on a study of some 32,200 Scottish children. Their conclusion, which agrees with (and actually understates) the consensus of other research on the subject, was that "breast-feeding is associated with a modest reduction in childhood obesity risk." The causal mechanism here is probably manifold, if also transparent: first, that human milk is lower in calories than formula; second, that babies must work harder to extract it, meaning that the amount of mother's milk ingested in, say, 10 minutes' time is both less in volume and less caloric than the same timed feeding of formula; third, that insofar as heaviness and obesity later in life appear increasingly linked to the fat cells laid down in one's first years, breast-feeding is ipso facto more inimical to the preconditions of future fatness than is formula-feeding.

One might think that a couch potato is a couch potato is a couch potato, but this is wrong.

And here, again, maternal absence in the first year of life would appear causally linked to childhood and adolescent obesity. For such feeding, as all medical experts and experienced mothers agree, works best when baby and mother are in constant proximity to one another. As many new mothers discover to their shock, the typical breast-fed baby eats anywhere from two to four hours apart, often around the clock and usually (if the baby has his way) for months on end. It is true that some working mothers diligently pump breast milk at work, thereby attempting to square nature's feeding circle (and, if they labor arduously enough, partially succeeding). Again, however, unless they are able to do so at anything resembling nature's own apparent pace — and it seems unlikely that most offices would not notice a 20-minute absence, say, three or four or five times in a working day — they are not able to provide such protection around the clock. Moreover (and as many feminist-minded cheerleaders for the practice seem invincibly unaware) the physical strain of such a regimen, between its added fluid and caloric requirements and the hormonal changes induced by it (lactation releases oxytocin, which causes drowsiness), can be prodigious — as working mothers who do pump milk for mother-absent consumption will attest.

It is hard to believe that, however laudable many such mothers may be in sacrificing themselves thus, most do not simply find it easier to throw in the breast-feeding towel sooner rather than later given the stress and inconvenience involved in shoehorning into minutes here and there a practice

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designed by nature to be very nearly a full-time job. In this way, too, therefore, lengthy maternal absence during the first year of life seems inarguably linked to the risk of child heaviness and obesity later in life.

Exercise

A THIRD WAY IN which absent parents appear linked to the child-fat problem is in the obviously related matter of child exercise. Generally speaking, the many children left unattended by their own mothers and fathers after school fall into two categories: those in after-hours care institutions of one sort or another and those who are "caring for self" during those hours, the current euphemism for latchkey children. The question for both groups is whether exercise is more or less likely during those late afternoon hours. For reasons varying in both cases, the answer would appear to be "less."

Ideally, of course, those after-school centers would include plenty of physical activity for children who have, in addition to their intrinsic needs, been cooped up in various classrooms for the preceding eight or so hours. The best such programs, one has to assume, do just that. What often transpires instead, however, is a free-for-all in which barely supervised children do more or less as they please within the geographical and other institutional limits of school grounds. Nor is it obvious how matters could be otherwise without a great deal more money being heaped on the problem than most schools seem wont to throw.

The fundamental problem, of course, is that after eight or so hours spent largely indoors, most children and adolescents are not going to be corralled by adults into yet another group activity. Those who want to play a game of pick-up ball will; those who shun such things are unlikely to be forced into them. The long-term interest in physical health that supervising adults ought to have is more than counterbalanced each day by the short-term problem of having to manage large numbers of tired, cranky, and rambunctious children until their parents arrive to take over. One can hardly blame the caregivers, or the children, for failing to make a concerted effort during those hours to put exercise first.

This is not at all to say that such programs are all to the bad; to the contrary, they are obviously far superior to no such programs at all. For some children, these hours of the week are the best, even only, opportunity to socialize with their friends; for others, depending on the noise and crowding, it may be the best time to do their homework; and for those growing up in worse-off neighborhoods especially, such programs are obviously safer than the same amount of time spent on the streets. Such ends, however, though obviously worthy in their own right, only prove that what happens after hours on school grounds is a multitude of events of which physical exercise may be only one — if, indeed, it isn't skipped altogether. Snacks in such pro-

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grams can be counted upon; exercise is for many just one option.

Even so, it is the children who "care for self" after school who would appear to be most sedentary of all. The reason is obvious: Generally speaking, what they are supposed to do is go home and stay there. "If you're parenting a latchkey kid," as Parenting.org puts the typical exhortation, "you need to teach him or her self-care skills, set rules and limits and talk about basic safety information." Among the tips, according to the National Crime Prevention Council's also-typical checklist, are: "Check[ing] in with you or a neighbor immediately after arriving home"; "Operat[ing] doors and window locks"; "Answer[ing] the doorbell and phone safely"; "Avoid[ing] walking or playing alone"; and related items. As is obvious from such a list, all of these are built on the assumption that children are going home to stay put. Of course this is as it should be: If school kids are going to be alone after school or at any other time, it is safest to be so behind locked doors rather than unsupervised out in the world. Here again, however, the paramount short-term concern of absent parents — physical safety and security — is obviously inimical to the longer-term benefits of something that does often require an adult body nearby, at least in urban settings, namely supervised exercise.

What happens after hours on school grounds is a multitude of events; physical exercise may only be one.

Though the argument that absent parents may be linked to lesser rates of exercise may seem novel, at least to some, misgivings about precisely that are endemic to the anecdotal literature on working parents and latchkey children — proving that many parents, at least, if not always their children, themselves suspect that today's young are far more sedentary, especially in the after-school hours, than were most of today's parents. And though the evidence is anecdotal, it is surely highly suggestive. Ask yourself this question: Has any contemporary observer ever suggested that today's children get *more* exercise than their parents did?

Even more significant, though, is the fact that astute observers of the national scene, from Jane Jacobs through the contemporary examples of Robert D. Putnam and Alan Ehrenhalt, have long argued for the related connection: that of absent adults to a lack of safety in the streets. As Ehrenhalt writes of a Southwest Chicago neighborhood in his interesting *The Lost City: The Forgotten Virtues of Community in America* (Basic Books, 1995), what it and others like it now lack is exactly what made such places real communities: "the sociability of the front stoop on summer evenings, the camaraderie of the back alley as an athletic field, the network of at-home moms who provided an instant neighborhood bulletin board seven days a week." By contrast, "On weekdays now, for long stretches of time, no one walks down the quiet residential streets. That is in part because

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the older people worry about crime and fear the streets almost as much as they took sustenance from them in the old days." Of the development of Elmhurst 10 miles away, he observes similarly, "there is the same sense of physical continuity and social upheaval . . . if the streets are pretty, they are also empty just about all the time. Emery Manor, like nearly all the suburban subdivisions in America, is now a neighborhood of two-job families, so you don't see mothers with strollers on their way to and from the park the way you would have in the 1950s. Nor, for that matter, do you see many older children playing outside by themselves in the late afternoon. . . . The social consequences of the two-job family," he concludes, "extend far beyond the empty streets in the daytime."

As Ehrenhalt, Putnam, and other observers would agree, the effect of the adult exodus from home during much of the day has been to reduce precisely the "eyes on the street" that is shorthand for what makes neighborhoods good rather than bad, safe rather than unsafe. Of course that reduction encourages crime itself (as policemen in Washington, D.C., will attest, for example, break-ins in affluent neighborhoods often occur between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., when by the criminal calculus people are least likely to be at home). But it has also contributed to a vicious circle: The more parents are out of the house, the more reluctant they are to have their kids play outside — because, since so many other adults are also out of the house, there is nothing like an informal network of like-minded adults to be alert to them. But the fewer the children who are allowed out to play, the less likely it is that other children be allowed out.

In the end, one enduring image of even our affluent neighborhoods is that of a child, or perhaps two, huddled indoors for hours on end in front of one screen or another with a cell or portable phone nearby, the burglar alarm system on, and no related adult in sight anywhere before dinnertime — if there is a dinnertime, that is. Whatever else may be thought of such a snapshot, it is manifestly not making children any slimmer.

Unwelcome truth

In the end, we are left with an intriguing array of evidence about a public health problem that is underexamined and undeniably ideologically explosive. No wonder that at least one commentator's response to the Anderson/Butcher/Levine study was to blast it for the "guilt" it might induce in working mothers. Such was not the authors' intent, of course. But at a time when many (divorced and single) mothers work because they cannot do otherwise, and when many others are out of the house for reasons of overriding importance to them — everything from bills to pay to personal fulfillment to the extra goods money can buy, including such child-emphasizing goods as tuition and travel — the news that absent mothers may be contributing to the fattening of their kids can

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hardly expect a soft social or political landing.

The child-fat problem coincides with an interesting moment in the debate over feminism: For while the benefits of working motherhood have been well-advertised throughout literature high and low, the possible downside of all this success remains virtually taboo.[2] One notable exception among feminist-friendly writers — about the only one of which I am aware — was an unusually frank acknowledgement made by Margaret Talbot in the course of a review of Robert D. Putnam's *Bowling Alone* (Simon & Schuster, 2000) in the *New York Times Book Review* (June 25, 2000). There, Talbot conceded a point that other writers have judged too controversial to touch — that the mass movement of mothers into the paid marketplace has had a deleterious effect on the aspects of domestic and communal life to which those same women would otherwise direct energy and attention. "Not many of us," as Talbot put it,

> leap to the defense of couch potato-ism as a civic virtue, whereas quite a few of us defend the expansion of autonomy and opportunity for women. But to say that the large-scale entrance of women into the labor market has exerted a significant effect on community life is not to deal in blame. It's to accept the reality that we are all in this together now, men, women and children. Women who work all day at demanding jobs have fewer hours and less energy to devote to community activities. . . . [I]t may be that with women in the paid labor force, we will never enjoy quite the level of associational life we had in the 50's. And in the end that trade-off may be worth it.

By "couch potato-ism," Talbot is clearly referring to adults rather than children in defending the lesser engagement of many working women in the world immediately around them. Whether she or other feminists would extend the same logic to the child corpulence reality — whether that too might be judged "worth it" from the point of view of women's social and personal gains — is so far unanswered.

Nonetheless, it is a question whose time has come. Indeed, the idea that non-parental care plays a role in the child-fat problem is not only defensible, given the evidence, but is also intellectually satisfying on a couple of counts as other theories are not. For one thing, such a link would explain aspects of the child-fat problem that have so far eluded explanation. One is the fact that, as mentioned earlier and as is contrary to popular preconceptions, child fat and obesity are rising among most developed countries (where mothers are also typically out of the house), irrespective of differences in diet, culture, and the rest. Another is the fact that this link would also help explain why immigrant families in which mothers often work are

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[2]For a contrarian view, see my "Home-Alone America," *Policy Review* 107 (June-July 2001).

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at particularly high risk of becoming overweight.

The point here is not metaphysical, and it is not even intentionally contrarian. I mean only to draw attention to a pedestrian fact: that a parent or other responsible adult in the home can mean the difference between a supervised diet, on the one hand, and an auto-gluttonous free-for-all on the other. Common sense itself demands the recognition that these events are indeed related — that children are eating more because they are less likely to be around anyone, particularly an adult anyone, telling them that this is a bad idea.

Of course, to observe that parents *can* exercise such influence over diet is not to assure that they will. As several generations of statistics now show, today's parents cannot be relied upon to be nutrition martinets, including for themselves (recall that heavy children most commonly have heavy mothers themselves). Moreover, even if mothers were around to supervise and take an educated interest in what children eat, there is no guarantee that their offspring would be svelte. Fate can be too unforgiving, and genetics unfortunately too influential, for such an equitable outcome. Whether in the home or outside it, parents may overfeed their children for a variety of reasons — force of habit, indirect peer pressure from other children who are allowed to eat exactly as they please, an overly literal translation of their nurturing instinct, perhaps even the idea that, in a world riven with problems like terrorism and drug addiction and imminent war and the rest, a few extra pounds here or there amount to small stuff that shouldn't be sweated. Even so, the fact that some parents are part of the problem does not mean that getting rid of them will improve the eating habits of their children. Who is more likely to gain weight — the child who comes home to a mother telling him to wait for dinner, or the one in an after-school program or empty house with access for hours on end to snack trays and fast food and bulging cupboards and refrigerators?

It is mothers, not others, who in general have the strongest opinions about these things.

It will be objected that more ought to be said about fathers in all this, and that mothers who are already busy to the point of exhaustion are being unfairly singled out for their offspring's good. Any mother, this author included, will heartily sympathize. Here as elsewhere, however, life is nakedly unfair. For reasons so deep as to be unplumbable, it is mothers, more than other adults in a child's life, who experience the felt need to police what their children eat and to cajole and order them into eating as the mother believes they "should." It is mothers, not others, who in general have the strongest opinions about these things — often vehement opinions, whether they are home with their children or not. Institutionalized care centers, whether day care or schools, use snacks and food for crowd-pleasing, if not crowd con-

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trol. And even the best paid help is simply unlikely to be as attentive to what children eat as a mother would — for the long-term health of the child is not in fact the caregiver's chief concern (that, rather, is the short-term goal of keeping the child supervised and happy). Again, for reasons that remain as mysterious as they are intuitively obvious, it appears that mothers, more than any other figures in a child's life, are willing to risk the short-term gluttonous dissatisfaction of the child for the longer-term benefits of a better diet. Some readers no doubt will decry that formulation; the open-minded will acknowledge its domestic truth.

Deplored or not, the link to which current research is only beginning to draw attention stands as is: a Janus-faced signpost showing the sunny side of our material wonderland, one in which everyone is free to leave home for the paid marketplace, and the darker side of what that social exodus is leaving behind. There is an argument latent here for a notion so culturally incorrect as to be incendiary — that perhaps some of what children of the better-off countries are doing with their mouths and stomachs is filling gaps made elsewhere in their lives. Maybe the "void" being "filled" by overeating, to use the intriguing terms of Overeaters Anonymous and other dietary theorists, is even more acute in young human beings than in others. Maybe a little more contact and companionship, with real rather than virtual parents and other family, might make them a little less ravenous.

For that matter — to be truly transgressive about it — a case might also be made for this corollary: that perhaps part of the increase in overweight women, many more of whom are heavy or obese than men, reflects a similar yearning being answered by compulsive recourse to high-calorie food and plenty of it. Domestic life has its trials and traumas, without question, but it has also its pleasures and consolations. Unable to enjoy these traditional comforts in anything like the doses to which humanity has for better or worse been long accustomed, perhaps the Western child — and perhaps also the absent Western mother — uses food to try to compensate for other things that are being missed.

After all, throughout the domestic social upheaval of this century — changes documented by batteries of social scientists, and dubbed by Francis Fukuyama the "Great Disruption" — no form of human contact has been as strained throughout the advanced world, as historically transformed when measured by the known facts of almost every other human society, as the bond between mother and child. Virtually undetachable throughout most of history, these figures commonly find themselves catapulted in our own prosperous time into separated spaces, spending many or most of their waking hours apart.

So are American children fat and getting fatter because their mothers are? Or are both of them getting fatter in one another's absence, and for the same reason: because the worlds of home and work are out of joint? Maybe, just maybe, that is partly what the consolation of calories is about.

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The Place of Government

Setting the terms to promote competition

By SEBASTIAN MALLABY

HISTORICAL WATERSHEDS ARE clearly perceived only in retrospect, but we can at least speculate that we are crossing one now. After two decades in which Anglo-Saxon political economy has been dominated by deregulation, privatization, and faith in the magic of the market, we may be entering a period when free-market wisdom is no longer conventional. If we are lucky, a new consensus may form around a slightly different principle: We will celebrate free competition rather than free markets, and we will recognize that promoting competition may frequently require departure from the principle of laissez-faire. If we are less lucky, we may face a more sweeping backlash against enterprise, with high costs to our prosperity.

The signs of this watershed are scattered, but they are too numerous to ignore. Abroad, we face a broad disaffection with pro-market reformism,

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which runs from disappointment at privatization and marketization in Russia to the return of leftist populism in Latin America. Within the United States, market advocates have been on the defensive, arguably, since the summer of 2000, when California's first electricity blackouts called into question the deregulation of the energy sector. Around the same time, the telecommunications sector began its dramatic meltdown, culminating two years later in the bankruptcies of WorldCom, Global Crossing, and more than 150 less famous participants in the experiment unleashed by the 1996 telecoms deregulation law. The only healthy telephone companies — the heirs to the local Bell firms — face their own set of questions: Despite deregulation, they have managed to retain a stranglehold on the local residential market, with the result that the lower prices promised by deregulation have not materialized. Meanwhile the airline industry, deregulated with huge success in 1978, has faced periodic questions. Customer frustration with delays fueled calls for a passengers' "bill of rights" in the late 1990s; mergers among airlines have caused some economists to fear for the price cuts that deregulation has delivered; recently the bankruptcy of U.S. Airways and United, along with the precarious finances of other airlines, has raised the question of whether further consolidation is inevitable. The health sector has faced calls for tougher regulation too, with state legislatures tying red tape around the health maintenance organizations that seek to restrain medical costs.

In the aftermath of September 11, Americans turned instinctively to government for solutions.

All that's before you consider the twin shocks of terrorism and the outcry over corporate governance following the bankruptcy of Enron. In the aftermath of September 11, Americans turned instinctively to government for solutions — not just to hunt down al Qaeda but also to create the economic adjustments apparently required by the new circumstances. The airline industry, weak even before September 11 and now positively reeling, was immediately promised $5 billion in cash and $10 billion in loan guarantees by Congress. The responsibility for security at airports was transferred from the private sector to the government. The Bush administration advocated the creation of a government insurer to underwrite terrorism risks. There were efforts to strengthen government surveillance of all kinds of communication and mobility — emails, money transfers, commercial shipments across borders — to the point that some commentators wondered whether globalization might be threatened.

The aftermath of Enron brought a similarly broad response. After considering the string of failures that allowed the firm's chief financial officer to steal $45 million from shareholders, Congress passed soup-to-nuts legislation that President Bush signed in July 2002. The new law strengthens gov-

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ernment oversight of auditors. It ends seven decades during which auditors have been allowed to write their own professional standards. It regulates the kinds of consulting services that accounting firms can peddle. It obliges Wall Street's stock analysts to declare the conflicts of interest created by their firms' investment-banking activities. It increases the government's power to pursue aberrant executives with criminal sanctions. It changes the dynamics of the corporate boardroom, requiring muscular and independent audit committees. What's more, the July legislation may not represent the full extent of Congress's appetite for new financial regulation. At this writing, members are mulling new rules for 401(k) pension accounts and for initial public offerings.

Moreover, these bursts of government activism have come not only from the left of the political spectrum. This is most strikingly true of the post-Enron reform wave. The chief author of the legislation was Sen. Paul Sarbanes, a Democrat, and its inspiration came partly from Arthur Levitt, Bill Clinton's chairman of the Securities and Exchange Commission. But the legislation was enthusiastically endorsed by the former Fed chairman, Paul Volcker, and it was welcomed by Alan Greenspan, the current one. Greenspan's position is especially revealing, both because he is the father and bellwether of Republican economic thinking and because of the way he explained himself. "My view was always that accountants knew or had to know that the market value of their companies rested on the integrity of their operations," he stated; it followed that government regulation of accounting was "unnecessary and indeed most inappropriate." But his faith in market incentives had been tested by successive corporate scandals, which demonstrated that, owing to weak oversight, rational accountants chose to forsake their professional standards, calculating that the risk of detection was minimal. In these circumstances, it takes stronger regulation to change accountants' incentives, and thus to restore the integrity of the capital markets. And so the Fed chairman offered an atypical admission. "I was wrong," he said.

The anti-market revolts that add up to the sense of watershed are as various in their origins as they are in their targets.

What explains these ideological reversals? We are of course dealing with a mixture of phenomena: The anti-market revolts that add up to the sense of watershed are as various in their origins as they are in their targets. War has expanded government repeatedly over the course of American history, so it isn't really surprising that the "war" on terrorism should do the same. Stock market slumps have had a similar effect over the past century, so the end of the long bull market of the 1990s was bound to provoke a new regulatory appetite. But it may also be that something more is happening. Privatization,

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deregulation, and general enthusiasm for markets may have reached the natural end of their political and intellectual ascendancy.

The deregulatory era began with spectacular successes, the kind you get when you go out into the orchard and pick the lowest and shiniest apples. In Britain, Margaret Thatcher privatized businesses that had no reason to be public in the first place: British Telecom, British Gas, and British Airways. In the United States, where state ownership had always been more limited, Jimmy Carter deregulated industries where the case for government controls was flimsiest: airlines (1978), trucking (1980), and railroads (1976 and 1980). Thatcher's privatizations were almost bound to look wonderful initially: They had the immediate effect of raising millions for the government, so permitting tax cuts; and the shares in the newly private companies were sold to the public cheaply, sprinkling millions of first-time shareholders with easy capital gains. Similarly, America's early deregulatory initiatives were a triumph: The savings to American consumers from airline deregulation alone have been estimated at more than $20 billion annually; adding trucking and railroads produces total benefits of around $50 billion a year. These successes, on both sides of the Atlantic, turned what came to be known as Thatcherism/Reaganism into an ideology that spread globally, spurring impatience with sleepy government everywhere from Latin America to New Zealand to ex-communist Eastern Europe. Given the timing of American deregulation — and given that Reagan flirted with the idea of reversing trucking deregulation — the ideology might even have been called Thatcherism/Carterism. Still, as ideologies go, this one did a lot of good.

Everybody agrees that public goods will not be produced by the market.

But there was always something fragile about this free-market ascendancy — flaws that suggested that one day it would go pop. For one thing, the case for deregulating prices of things like airline tickets never amounted to a case for rolling back regulation that protects health, safety, and the environment. Economists distinguish between two kinds of regulation: There's the kind that controls which firms can enter a market and what they can charge once they're in it, and there's the kind that forces firms to "produce" public goods like cleaner air or safer roads. The deregulatory movement that began in the late 1970s was really an attack on the first kind of regulation — price and entry regulation — and not on the sort that addresses public goods. Everybody agrees that public goods will not be produced by the market, and most people agree that health, safety, and the environment are important; so a large amount of regulation in these areas is inevitable. Even supposed deregulatory hawks, such as John Graham, the head of regulatory oversight in the Bush administration, freely accept this; "the federal regulatory state is here to stay," he declared in a speech recently. The existing stock of public-

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goods regulation imposes around $800 billion in costs on Americans annually — a sum larger than the discretionary federal budget. That's a rather big qualification to the notion that sweeping deregulation of the sort envisaged in the Reagan/Thatcher heyday was ever really possible.

The second fragility in the free-market ascendancy was a tendency to exaggerate the private sector's virtues. When conservatives talked of "getting government off people's backs," they assumed that unburdened citizens and corporations would naturally do good. But, left to their own devices, corporations do not necessarily seek profits by virtuously inventing new products and more efficient ways of making them; they also seek profits by colluding with one another to push up prices, by defrauding customers, and by lobbying the government for favors. The pharmaceutical industry is a good example. It invents life-saving drugs, and this is wonderful. But it also engages in legal maneuvers to extend monopolies on patented drugs beyond the time of expiration; and it has been known to pay generic drug makers not to market cheap versions of brand-name drugs that have gone off patent. These practices cost consumers billions — in fact, legal maneuvers to add 30 months to the patent protection of a single heartburn drug, Prilosec, are reckoned to have transferred $5 billion from the pockets of patients to AstraZeneca, the drug's maker. It's hardly surprising that the cost of drugs has become a political issue. To counter this less virtuous side of private-sector behavior, strong government — in this case, strong antitrust enforcement — is necessary. In August 2002 the chairman of the Federal Trade Commission, Tim Murris, announced plans for a newly vigorous focus on the machinations of the health industry.

Left to their own devices, corporations do not necessarily seek profits virtuously.

The third weakness in the free-market ascendancy was the underestimation of the problems posed by "network" industries. Even if you set aside the whole area of public-goods regulation as beyond the reach of serious pruning, it's still not clear that the other kind of regulation can be cut that far. Many important industries have a natural tendency to monopoly: It costs so much to create an electricity grid, for example, that competitors aren't going to take on the incumbent by installing a whole new set of wires. These economies of scale for producers are matched in other cases by economies of scale for consumers: The value to customers of an instant messaging system or PC operating system depends on how many other people are using it or designing add-ons for it, so there's a natural tendency to go with the industry leader. Both kinds of scale economy — for producers and for consumers — pose a challenge to believers in deregulation. If you let the market rip, the result may be monopoly and higher prices. The best course may be for government to force competition — for example, by demanding that the owner of the dominant instant messaging system allow its sub-

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scribers to communicate with friends who sign up for rival services. Or the best course may be for government to accept that a given industry is a natural monopoly — and to compensate for the absence of effective market discipline by imposing price controls.

These three weaknesses in the free-market vision — the need for public-goods regulation, the danger of private-sector rent-seeking and collusion, and the challenge posed by network industries — explain why one common view of the left/right debate is inadequate. That view is that the free-market right has had the intellectual upper hand over the past two decades, and that its failure to score clearer electoral and policy victories represented the inertia of the political system. According to this view, Newt Gingrich's inability to roll back the state is no different from his failure to reform entitlements: Both efforts failed for lack of popularity, but both had powerful policy logic. Yet the truth may actually be otherwise. Entitlement reform is clearly necessary, and sooner or later it will have to happen. But rolling back government is different. Despite the intellectual assumptions that have dominated since the 1980s, government may not be shrinkable. And this is not just a matter of political inertia or the public's incurable appetite for transfer payments. It reflects the market's limited ability to function without government supervision. In the words of Alfred Kahn, the father of airline deregulation and an all-round cheerleader for market mechanisms, "successful deregulation rarely consists of total laissez-faire."

Anti-market or pro-competition

THERE IS NO DOUBT what some on the left would like to do with this insight: Press for an indiscriminate expansion in the role of government. In the wake of Enron and its successor corporate scandals, John Sweeney, the AFL-CIO president, has railed against "the corporate crime wave that is sweeping our country"; he has denounced "profiteers," citing not only Enron but also Microsoft. His purpose is to discredit freedom of action for all companies, even ones that operate in competitive industries where markets are the best discipline. "From his first days in office, President Bush advanced legal and regulatory changes to loosen controls on big corporations," Sweeney says ominously, as though bigness alone is enough to merit regulation. American workers have "been had by the big corporations, the big banks and investment and accounting firms, and their big co-conspirators in the U.S. Congress."

If this rhetoric has traction, then we are all in trouble: The labor unions' vision of government is a menace. Many of Sweeney's favorite causes — raising the minimum wage, blocking trade expansion — sacrifice economic growth in order to benefit members of his unions; in this sense, Sweeney is no different from corporate lobbyists who wring subsidies and favors from the government. A higher minimum wage raises the pay of poor workers but

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hurts the unemployed whose hopes hang on new job creation; it is a win for the poor and a loss for the very poor, as well as a growth-slowing tax on firms. Trade protectionism, similarly, is good for union members who work in threatened industries such as steel and textiles; but it comes at the expense of the rest of country, which could benefit to the tune of $200 billion annually if the world's remaining trade barriers were eliminated (according to a study by Harvard's Jeff Frankel). In sum, Sweeney's intention is to use the real failings of markets as an excuse to push government interventions that have nothing to do with those failings — and everything to do with his desire to pick society's pockets for the benefit of his constituents.

Other left-wing statements have not been more encouraging. Robert Kuttner, the co-editor of the *American Prospect*, was quick to sense the coming of a new anti-market zeitgeist, but in a long article in August 2002 he put an alarming gloss on it. Seizing upon the corporate scandals and the stock market's weakness, he offered a number of reasonable points about the shortcomings of markets (for example, that they don't provide everyone with health care) mixed in with a lot of unreasonable ones (for example, that "market provision of health care is a disaster"). The voucher movement, in Kuttner's estimation, is merely a "money-making scheme," and the deregulation of airlines and telecoms were both equally misguided. And then you must accept that "the ultimate manifestation of the laissez-faire hegemony is the global free market, in which speculative money flows periodically wreck the economies of developing countries, undercut labor and environmental regulation in advanced democracies, and invite the creation of tax havens for the wealthy." Like Sweeney, Kuttner is using the recent failures of deregulation to denounce market thinking more broadly. "Laissez-faire itself is the ultimate corporate fraud," he asserts at the outset. "The entire set of free-market era claims are due for scholarly reappraisal and broad political challenge," he says by way of a conclusion.

Pro-market people need to accept that the right policy is often not deregulation but rather smart regulation.

This overreaching from sections of the left is all the more reason why the rest of us need to rethink our outlook. In the face of setbacks for markets, from California's blackouts to the corporate governance scandals, the case in favor of the market needs to be restated vigorously, but it also needs to be defined more carefully than it has been. Pro-market people need to distinguish between issues and industries where an aggressive deregulatory approach is justified and those where this will only backfire. They need to accept that the right policy is often not deregulation but rather smart regulation and that the goal isn't to cut the number of government rules but to ensure that rules make sense. Above all, they need to focus their ambitions

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not on promoting markets but on promoting competition, a subtle shift in language that can strengthen their position wonderfully. It is competition, after all, that spurs innovation and keeps prices down; markets are merely a means to promote that competition. And competition can be fostered by other mechanisms as well, including various types of government action. Once the intellectual leap is made from being pro-market to being pro-competition, conservatives and centrists will no longer make the mistake of praising markets too lavishly — and then giving the left an opening when it becomes evident that markets have shortcomings. If pro-market people can become tomorrow's pro-competition people, they will be free to choose flexibly between markets and government activism, recognizing each as means to the pro-competition end.

Monopolies and cartels are anti-competitive; this goes for government services as well as private industry.

Being pro-competition leads to robust laissez-faire positions on a number of familiar issues. The whole point of trade protectionism is that it protects domestic industries from competition: This is clearly bad. The whole point of minimum wage laws is that they protect workers from the full rigors of the competitive labor market: This is bad too. Monopolies and cartels are anti-competitive, so these should be smitten; this goes for government services as well as private industry, so school vouchers are excellent. Government subsidies, which allow businesses to stay afloat even though they can't survive through open competition, are generally wasteful: That means we should zero out most farm payments except those aimed at protecting the environment or promoting other public goods. Business lobbyists are a menace, because their raison d'être is to win profits for their firms by securing government favors. If you are pro-competition, it's obvious that firms deserve profits only when they acquire them by competing, because it is only under those circumstances that profits reflect their success in improving the lives of consumers.

On the other hand, being pro-competition can lead you to advocate strong government action in other areas. The most obvious is antitrust enforcement — a violation of laissez-faire that can extend to the extreme step of breaking up a company. But there are other areas in which being pro-competition may lead you to be pro-government. Creating competitive electricity markets involves the big-government step of breaking up vertically integrated utilities, forcing them to surrender control of the transmission grid so that rival generating companies get a fair chance to sell into it. Creating electricity competition also involves recognizing that the transmission grid is a natural monopoly and that transmission prices therefore must be regulated. Likewise, promoting electricity competition involves a federal drive to standardize the workings of these grids so that electricity can be

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traded efficiently across regions. Moreover, electricity competition will only end badly unless it's recognized that competitive electricity generators lack natural incentives to maintain reserve capacity — the extra power plants you need to keep the grid running when the weather hits extremes or when chance puts several big plants out of commission simultaneously — so you need a complex regulatory formula to require that reserve generation gets built. For all these reasons, the push toward electricity competition shouldn't really be called deregulation. It should be called restructuring.

In fact, a close look at many of the industries that have been "deregulated" over the past quarter-century shows a surprising amount of residual regulation. From a pro-market perspective, the residue might seem troubling, since it offends against the principle of laissez-faire. But from a pro-competition perspective, the residual regulation may or may not be worrisome, depending on how much of it serves the essential goal of promoting competition. In the case of electricity, the government functions described above are essential to competition, but that's not true of all the roles that regulators continue to play in electricity. The clearest example of bad residual regulation is the control of retail prices, a practice that became notorious during California's blackouts. By controlling what consumers paid for electricity, California muffled the price signals that would have prompted consumers to economize during times of scarcity. As a result, the only means of limiting consumption was to ration it: that is, to impose blackouts. Moreover, California's retail price controls put its utilities in the position of buying power at unregulated and therefore volatile prices while selling at regulated fixed ones. When the wholesale price went up, the utilities went bust.

It is ridiculous to complain that deregulation has produced smaller seats on airlines.

Or consider the airline industry. If we are clear that the aim of deregulation is to promote competition, it becomes easier to sift the various complaints from politicians and consumer groups, distinguishing the reasonable ones from the nonsense. It is ridiculous, for example, to complain that deregulation has produced smaller seats on airlines, since the smaller seats merely reflect airlines' competitive efforts to meet the demand for lower prices. It is ridiculous, similarly, to complain that deregulation has produced bewildering price discrimination, since the low fares charged to nonbusiness passengers who are willing to fly at off-peak times and stay over for a Saturday represent consumer-friendly discounts. On the other hand, it's fair to worry about airport congestion and late takeoffs, but here the remedy is less regulation, not more of it. Airports should be freed to auction off their takeoff slots so that busy slots become more expensive. The resulting price signals will drive some commercial passengers and many private jets to take off at other times of day or from other nearby airports.

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There are, however, some things in the airline business that government needs to fix. Alfred Kahn, the father of airline deregulation cited earlier, points out that a laissez-faire approach to this industry is liable to produce unwholesome concentrations of power. An airline that controls a large share of the flights at a particular airport has a big incentive to capture still more of them, since pretty soon local passengers will be forced to pay whatever rates it charges. Because of this incentive, a strong airline would rationally pay more for a landing slot at its hub airport than would an upstart challenger that lacks its pricing power. This logic creates a situation in which some airports are indeed dominated by particular carriers; in which airlines have merged together; and in which airlines have an incentive to engage in predatory pricing to wipe out competitors. As a result, at least some pro-competition economists believe that antitrust enforcement should have been stronger in the airline business than it has been. And, despite his anti-regulatory instincts, Kahn has proposed government action to head off the threat of predatory pricing. In his elegant formulation, an airline that cut its prices and then saw a competitor withdraw would be required to maintain those low rates for two years — enough to deter the elimination of rivals through loss-making prices. Again, the same principle guides this call for government intervention: Competition matters more than deregulation.

The same principle guides this call for government intervention: Competition matters more than deregulation.

Or consider the telephone industry. To promote competition, it has been necessary to adopt an aggressive regulatory stance toward the "Baby Bells," the incumbent local monopolies. This aggression, admittedly, has met with mixed success. It has worked in spurring the quick diffusion of the internet: The Bells were prohibited from charging extra to internet users or providing dial-up internet connections themselves, so hundreds of internet service providers sprang up and consumers got rock-bottom prices. In the early stages of the process, internet access cost about a fifth of the rate charged in Europe, where national phone companies were allowed to dominate the business; not surprisingly, the takeup rate in the United States was roughly twice as high as in Europe. On the other hand, the regulatory effort to force voice telephone competition in the local market has worked less well. Rather than forcing the Bells out of this business (which would have been extreme, since it is their core business), the strategy was to allow the Bells to stay in it but to require them to rent out their lines to rivals who wanted to compete for the Bells' customers. Not surprisingly, the Bells refused to shoot holes in their own feet; they devised subtle ways of keeping competitors off their lines, with the result that the Bells still control more than 90 percent of local

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retail customers and (because of this prolonged monopoly) prices have not fallen. But whatever this failure, it's likely that some form of regulation of local telephone services is necessary — either the sort that attempts to force competitive discipline into this monopoly market or the sort that accepts the monopoly as given and regulates its prices. Laissez-faire is not an option — except perhaps in urban areas where wireless phone services are in a position to challenge the Bells' monopoly.

Deregulation vs. restructuring

In sum, there aren't many industries where it's enough merely to cut redundant red tape, then wait while prosperity advances. Some of the early deregulations may have been a bit like that: The pioneers who busted the old trucking cartel had the satisfaction of seeing the number of firms in the business shoot up from 10,000 to 450,000 over the two ensuing decades. But the easy harvesting of the first low-hanging fruit did not mean that the next round would be simple. In most industries, it turns out, cutting back one kind of government regulation requires installing a different kind in its place. "Deregulation" turns out to be a less accurate term than "restructuring." And the test of its usefulness is the extent to which competition is enhanced.

If this sounds obvious, it is in a way; regulatory experts have been making variations on this point for years. Yet the distinction between being pro-market and pro-competition is frequently lost in the debate in Washington, where countless political struggles are cast as battles between the forces of the market and the forces of big government. Almost as often, losing sight of the pro-market/pro-competition distinction has placed centrists and conservatives on the weaker side of policy arguments. This is what seems to have happened during the recent battle over financial regulation following Enron.

From a pro-competition perspective, the issue at stake in that battle was the competition to raise capital. This can take place efficiently only if companies make reliable financial disclosures, allowing savers to make judgments as to which firms will use their money most productively. If companies can get away with false disclosures, they may attract more capital than they deserve, allowing them to buy up rivals that might be better run; in this way, skewed competition in the capital market can smother fair competition in the goods market. For this reason, it's important that financial disclosures be fair; but, as Alan Greenspan conceded, there is no market mechanism to ensure that fairness. The auditors who are supposed to do the job get paid by the managers whose books they oversee; they have little incentive to blow the whistle on them. It's therefore essential that government look over the shoulders of auditors to make sure they're doing their job; and, because such oversight can never be perfect, it's important to prohibit practices that increase the auditors' incentives to be soft on management, such as the prac-

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tice of collecting consulting fees from those same managers. Equally, it's essential to transfer the job of writing audit standards from the auditors' own lobby to an independent regulator; otherwise auditors will fill the standards with vague phrases and loopholes, making regulatory efforts to enforce them more or less meaningless.

And yet, for some reason, it took many market supporters a long time after the Enron collapse to accept that pro-competition principles point to tough regulation of auditors. Greenspan's support for reform came only on the eve of its passage; until then, he had argued that markets could largely be trusted to correct auditors' shortcomings without action from Congress. The Bush administration, similarly, shied away from serious reform in the first half of 2002; only when the momentum of successive scandals swept the reform movement to triumph in Congress did the administration declare itself a convert. The same early resistance to reform was even more pronounced among several Republican heavyweights in the Senate, notably the former economist Phil Gramm; in May, Gramm and his allies attempted to drown the Democratic bill by proposing 123 amendments to it. In the House, the Republican caucus lined up behind a much weaker reform proposal that would, among other things, have left auditors free to preserve the loopholes in their professional standards. At the Securities and Exchange Commission, likewise, Republican-appointed chairman (since resigned) Harvey Pitt came out in favor of limited reform. The Chamber of Commerce, one of the principal lobby groups for market causes such as freer trade, utterly lost touch with its senses. Its president, Thomas Donohue, put out a letter accusing the Senate reformers of a "knee-jerk, politically charged reaction" to the Enron scandal and of posing a threat to "informed market decision-making."

In all these cases, pro-market forces seem to have missed the possibility that government activism might be the best way to promote vigorous and open competition. That failure, more than any other single episode, animates the argument of this essay. The post-Enron reform battle gave a huge boost to the anti-market skeptics of the left, whose arguments menace our prosperity; it was a boost that might have been avoided if conservatives and centrists had been quicker to embrace a robust government response to the Enron crisis. But many in the economic mainstream were slow to realize this because their initial reaction was to fall back on an instinctive belief in markets and hostility to regulation. It is that instinct that must be reexamined, both in light of the Enron experience and in light of the natural limits to the deregulatory ambitions of the Reagan/Thatcher period. That reexamination, I suggest, will resolve itself in a few simple ideas. Markets are only one means to competition, and there are others. Markets work sometimes, and other times not. But competition is always to be desired. For competition is a constant spur: to innovation, to invention, to ever more efficient techniques of production, and therefore to prosperity.

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What Is "Multilateral"?

By JOHN VAN OUDENAREN

IN RECENT YEARS unilateralism has emerged as the most contentious issue in U.S.-European relations. Europeans have complained about what they see as a U.S. go-it-alone approach to foreign policy, one said to contrast with a European tendency to emphasize "negotiation, compromise, and the virtues of agreed constraints."[1] These criticisms, already common during the Clinton years, intensified during the early months of the Bush administration when they were fueled by U.S. rejection of the Kyoto Protocol and the threat to withdraw from the ABM treaty. After a lull following the September 11 terrorist attacks, they rose to new heights as Europeans protested the U.S. failure to use NATO in the war in Afghanistan, the treatment of captured al Qaeda suspects in Cuba, Washington's sidetracking of the Biological

[1]Nicole Gnesotto, "An End to Introversion," *WEU Institute for Security Studies Newsletter* 34 (July 2001).

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Weapons Convention (BWC) review conference, and the U.S. campaign to exempt itself from jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

For all its fervor, however, the transatlantic debate over unilateralism has been intellectually rather superficial, with little serious discussion of the political, economic, and legal questions that arise in connection with the practice of multilateralism in a world of sovereign states. Political rhetoric has tended to obscure the fact that there is no consensus in either the academic or policymaking communities about how multilateralism should be defined; about when, if ever, unilateral action is acceptable; or about such issues as the relationship between regional multilateral cooperation, such as has unfolded in Europe for the past 50 years, and the kind of global multilateralism embodied in the United Nations.

For all its fervor, the transatlantic debate over unilateralism has been intellectually superficial.

Multilateralism is easiest to define in economic affairs, where it remains the bedrock on which the international financial and trading systems are built. As codified in the IMF Articles of Agreement, monetary multilateralism traditionally has meant the convertibility of national currencies on a non-discriminatory basis and rejection of the currency blocs and competitive devaluations that characterized the interwar period. As enshrined in the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), trade multilateralism has meant application of the most-favored-nation principle on a non-discriminatory basis. In both the IMF and GATT/World Trade Organization (WTO) systems, offenders against agreed multilateralist principles have been countries *within* these organizations that have failed to observe these principles. Nonmember countries do not take on the obligations or receive the benefits of membership, but the stigma of unilateralism has not attached to nonmembership.

In the political sphere, multilateralism is embodied in the universally accepted obligations contained in the U.N. Charter, the provisions of international treaties, and customary international law. Given the somewhat schizophrenic character of the charter's attitude toward the state, unilateralism is both absolutely prohibited (Article 25, obligation to carry out the decisions of the Security Council) and absolutely protected (Article 51, inherent right to self-defense; Article 2, sovereign equality and sanctity of domestic jurisdiction).

A third and increasingly contentious area in which multilateralism applies is in regard to global issues such as arms control, the environment, and human rights. In these areas, unilateralism tends to be associated with nonparticipation in or nonratification of agreements, as in the U.S. rejection of Kyoto and the ICC. It is not clear, however, when a nonuniversal agreement to cooperate in a particular issue area should acquire the same multilateral

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status as, for example, the U.N. Charter or whether a state exercising its traditional sovereign right not to sign such a treaty should be branded as unilateralist.

Against this background, it is worth identifying some of the key conceptual issues that might be used to frame a more productive transatlantic discussion of multilateralism. Five in particular stand out: the importance of norms versus numbers, universal versus non-universal arrangements, the problem of "dysfunctional multilateralism," enforcement and the role of international organizations, and the relationship between multilateralism and European integration.[2]

Norms vs. numbers

NUMBERS HAVE TENDED to dominate recent discussions of multilateralism. The Kyoto, land mine, ICC, and Comprehensive Test Ban (CTBT) treaties all were signed by well over 100 states, with unilateralist or quasi-"rogue" status attaching to those countries refusing to sign or to ratify. There is an older diplomatic tradition that regards multilateralism more as a matter of norms than of sheer numbers. The Concert of Europe operated in accordance with a set of unwritten rules that the five great powers tacitly observed. One was that no great power would act alone; unilateralism was strictly proscribed. Another was that no great power could be isolated or humiliated and that under no circumstances would four of the powers gang up on one of the others; nor would they consider mobilizing the smaller members of the system against one of their number.

Some general norms, traceable to the Congress of Vienna and the Concert of Europe, have survived to the present. Article 27 of the U.N. Charter effectively establishes a norm in the guise of a number: No great power-cum-permanent member of the Security Council can be outvoted on an issue of substance before the council. If considered as a multilateral organization, the EU functions on the basis of written and unwritten rules designed to safeguard the interests of committed minorities — indeed of individual member states where vital interests are concerned. The U.S.-led post-1945 multilateral system also operated in accordance with certain norms, identified by John Gerard Ruggie as indivisibility, generalized principles of conduct, and diffuse reciprocity.[3]

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[2]A sixth issue — the relationship between multilateralism and multipolarity (and, by implication, unilateralism and unipolarity) — will be discussed in a future article in *Policy Review*.

[3]John Gerard Ruggie, "Multilateralism: The Anatomy of an Institution," *International Organization* 46:3 (Summer 1992).

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In recent years the international community has devoted enormous attention to particular problems without giving much thought to *general* norms of conduct that might define relations among the great powers, between smaller states and the great powers, and between international civil society and state actors. The detailed and highly technical agreements on nuclear testing, land mines, the ICC, and global warming arguably were less expressions of accord among states than the result of efforts by some powers (and not always the same set) to exert pressure on others. In the CTBT negotiations, for example, the United States and its allies used a total ban on testing to press a would-be great power, India, to eschew its nuclear option in a way that clearly backfired. More often, the United States was on the receiving end of efforts to exert pressure through multilateral diplomacy as it was forced to chose between signing agreements that it had warned it could not accept and rejecting these agreements and being isolated.

The international community has not given much thought to general norms of conduct.

The style of diplomacy that has developed since the early 1990s both reflects and in turn reinforces the absence of consensus about multilateralism as a set of procedural norms. Key treaties have been hammered out at chaotic conferences operating against rigid deadlines in the glare of publicity. Much of the nuance and flexibility that traditionally have been associated with diplomacy and used to accommodate divergent national positions has been eliminated as governments are asked to vote on comprehensive, take-it-or-leave-it texts that bar reservations and that are made especially difficult to amend.[4] While some of this activity reflects the growth of NGO influence, much of it tends to be orchestrated by states and groups of states in what could be seen as a rather traditional struggle for international advantage.

Lack of underlying consensus about the sources of multilateral order and the reluctance of states to subordinate specific objectives to general norms also can be seen in the fate of international institutions. While U.S. unilateralism frequently is associated with "U.N.-bashing," many of the self-styled champions of multilateralism *also* have taken an essentially tactical approach to the U.N., thereby helping to undermine its authority and effectiveness. When India blocked agreement on a CTBT in the Conference on

[4]See Kenneth Anderson, "The Ottawa Convention on Banning Landmines, the Role of International Non-governmental Organizations and the Idea of International Civil Society," *European Journal of International Law* 11:1 (2000); Ruth Wedgwood, "The International Criminal Court: An American View," *European Journal of International Law* 10:1 (1999); and David Davenport, "The New Diplomacy," *Policy Review* 116 (December 2002-January 2003).

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Disarmament, treaty proponents led a successful effort to transfer its consideration to the General Assembly in a way that India charged was a violation of longstanding U.N. norms and procedures. In pursuing the land mine ban, Canada and Norway invented their own negotiating forum, outside the structure of the U.N., which they then took to the U.N. as a fait accompli. Similarly, the land mine, ICC, and CTBT negotiations all became surrogate battlegrounds in which the middle powers used negotiations on unrelated issues to press their campaign to weaken the Security Council.

While it is not always the case that the United States is guided by norms and the EU by numbers (Washington is capable of mobilizing large coalitions against the EU on economic issues and has joined with Europe on issues such as nonproliferation), the two sides frequently divide along these lines. With regard to the ICC, for example, Europeans ask why the United States opposes such an obviously multilateral enterprise. From a U.S. perspective, the more pertinent question is why an organization that has not been approved by the U.N. Security Council and that is rejected by the three largest countries in the world (China, India, and the United States) should qualify as multilateral in the first place.

Universal vs. nonuniversal arrangements

CLOSELY RELATED TO the issue of norms is the question of whether international arrangements must approach universality to be considered truly multilateral. The most unambiguously multilateral arrangements are those with universal or near-universal membership, such as the U.N., WTO, or IMF. For arrangements or groupings that are less than universal, competing claims among such groupings or with third states inevitably arise. In international trade, the relationship between regional blocs such as the EU and NAFTA and the global trading order is a key economic, legal, and political issue. Economists long have worried that the internal multilateralism of the European and other regional integration projects may be achieved through discrimination against outsiders that runs counter to global norms.

While regional groupings at least have a geographic rationale that bolsters their claims to multilateral legitimacy, the same cannot be said for functionally defined groupings, which often are rather arbitrary with regard to membership and rules for decision-making. The Northwest Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO), for example, a body that played a key role in the EU-Canada "turbot war" of 1995, has had a shifting membership determined less by anything having to do with fishing than by exogenous political factors. The size of the organization decreased when Portugal, Spain, and East Germany joined the EU, increased when the Baltic countries became independent, and will shrink again as the EU enlarges. Denmark and France effectively are represented twice in NAFO, once through the EU as well as

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individually on behalf of their colonial possessions in North America (Greenland and St. Pierre and Miguelon). While this arrangement has the virtue of allowing all interested parties to participate, it is somewhat arbitrary to ascribe a robust multilateral legitimacy to decisions taken by the NAFO General Council under the established means of simple majority vote.

Another fisheries body, the International Whaling Commission (IWC), offers a more extreme example of an organization that has multiple members but is not multilateral in any normative sense. The IWC was established in 1946 by 15 countries with an interest in conservation. Over time, changing norms and the continued decimation of whale populations led to the emergence of an abolitionist majority in the IWC, culminating in the adoption by majority vote in 1986 of a moratorium on whaling. Norway and Japan since have led an increasingly bitter struggle to have the moratorium lifted while anti-whaling nations have sought to leave it in place. This struggle has been waged through an almost farcical membership "arms race" in which Japan, using its aid budget as leverage, has effectively cajoled poor developing countries into joining the IWC for the sole purpose of being able to vote to lift the ban while the anti-whaling forces have signed up additional members to vote to uphold it. Whether Japan resumes whaling under multilateral sanction or in unilateralist breach of an international rule thus can turn on the votes of landlocked Mongolia (pro-) or tiny and landlocked San Marino (anti-). This clearly is a case in which multilateralism and unilateralism have ceased to have any real meaning, having become purely artifacts of voting rules, shifting membership, and the tactical calculations of the pro- and anti-whaling nations.

The most problematic multilateral groupings are those that are purely self-defined.

Perhaps the most problematic multilateral groupings are those that are purely self-defined, such as the various "like-minded" groups that arose in the 1990s to promote international agreements on such issues as land mines and the International Criminal Court. The original like-minded group on land mines had 11 members: leaders Canada and Norway and nine other states, six of which were European. The like-minded group promoting the court had 27 members, 16 of which were European. While such self-defined leadership groups can play pioneering roles in international diplomacy, it is not clear on what basis they lay claim to multilateralist legitimacy and ascribe unilateralist illegitimacy to states that refuse to follow their lead. This is particularly the case when the members of the like-minded group are disproportionately from a single region, are less affected than non-like-minded states by the proposed agreements under discussion (e.g., relatively secure states promoting bans on various defensive weapons such as mines), or when the claim to moral leadership of a like-minded state is open to ques-

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tion (as in the participation of Tudjman's Croatia and Meciar's Slovakia in the group pressing for rapid creation of the International Criminal Court). While the EU has tended to bandwagon with such groups, the United States and U.S. power more often than not have been their implicit or explicit targets.

Dysfunctional multilateralism

ACADEMIC DEBATES ABOUT the nature of the international system frequently revolve around the issue of anarchy. Realists argue that international society is fundamentally anarchical and that multilateral cooperation cannot eliminate the basic struggle for power among states. Liberal institutionalists hold that cooperation, especially in multilateral international institutions, does shape the behavior of sovereign states in ways that modify the anarchy of the international system. What neither of these perspectives acknowledges sufficiently is the phenomenon of what might be called "dysfunctional multilateralism" — forms of international cooperation and organization that affect the decision-making calculus of states (in ways that realists tend to discount) but are at best suboptimal and at worst counterproductive from the perspective of international order (a perspective that liberal institutionalists tend to disregard).

In extreme form, dysfunctionality can involve purposeful violations of multilateral agreements, as in the Soviet, Iraqi, and North Korean violations of various arms control treaties, but it applies in many other areas as well. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, a former scientist at the USSR Ministry of Fisheries revealed to a stunned session of the IWC that for 40 years the Soviet fleet had conducted clandestine whaling operations — from 1948 to 1973 alone slaughtering 48,477 humpback whales rather than the 2,710 officially reported. Deception on this scale rendered meaningless all IWC statistical calculations and called into question the scientific underpinnings of an international conservation policy conducted over a period of decades. When asked why the IWC had not publicized its private suspicions about the scale of Soviet whaling and the statistics provided by Moscow, the IWC president remarked, "that is not the style of an international organization."[5] At least as far as Soviet participation was concerned, the IWC was clearly dysfunctional in contributing to its mandated goal of maintaining a viable preservation regime for marine mammals.

However problematic, flagrant violations of this kind probably contribute less to dysfunctional multilateralism than do more mundane deviations from

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[5]Quoted in David D. Caron, "The International Whaling Commission and the North Atlantic Marine Mammal Commission: The Institutional Risks of Coercion in Consensual Structures," *American Journal of International Law* 89:1 (January 1995).

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international norms. In many cases, such deviations are legal, having been built into the loose, post-World War II model of multilateralism with its numerous opt-outs and escape clauses. Historically, such clauses often reflected an implicit bargain in which stronger countries were held to higher standards than were applied to countries still recovering from World War II or otherwise "catching up." In exchange, weaker countries recognized that standards as such were important and that *some* level of compliance was expected. In the IMF, for example, as recently as 1984 only 59 of 146 member countries accepted Article VIII obligations regarding convertibility, with the rest covered by various "transitional" arrangements permissible under Article XIV. Similarly, the GATT has been characterized as "multilateralism with exceptions,"[6] in which little effort was made to enforce compliance by the poorer signatories provided they accepted the principle of a rules-based system.

In many cases, deviations from international norms are legal, part of a system of opt-outs and escape clauses.

Exceptions and opt-out clauses also have been a feature of more specialized forums, such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) or the various regional fisheries bodies. Under the Chicago Convention of 1944, for example, ICAO technical committees are responsible for recommending international standards for safety, which then are adopted by the ICAO Council. Once a standard comes into effect, a member state has an obligation to comply. But the convention allows any state to indicate that it is unable to comply with a standard, in which case it is not bound by it. Similarly, in bodies such as NAFO, scientific committees recommend annual allowable quotas for various species on the basis of assessments relating to the needs of conservation. Member states then adopt and allocate these quotas by negotiation and, if need be, by voting. If a member state objects to a quota, however, it is not bound by it and may set its own quota. These kinds of objection procedures give states an escape in the case of extraordinary domestic circumstances even as they enlist peer pressure and exposure to scientific advice in pursuit of longer-term goals.

Multilateralism of this kind can become dysfunctional when states or groups of states systematically abuse the available opt-out and escape clauses. This happened in NAFO following the accession of Portugal and Spain to the EU. Until 1985, the EU generally followed the Canadian-led conserva-

[6]Judith Goldstein, "Creating the GATT Rules: Politics, Institutions, and American Policy," in John Gerard Ruggie, ed., *Multilateralism Matters* (Columbia University Press, 1993), 219.

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tionist line in setting quotas. With the accession of Spain and Portugal, however, the EU came under pressure to resist NAFO's conservative management approach. Between 1986 and 1992, the EU used the objection procedure 53 times to set quotas for its fleets far higher than that recommended by the Scientific Council and voted by the NAFO membership, thereby setting the stage for the 1995 EU-Canada turbot war.[7] In other cases, multilateralism becomes dysfunctional because states simply lack the ability to comply with their international obligations. Many developing countries do not have the expertise to inspect the airworthiness of a modern jetliner. In such cases, member states can fulfill their legal responsibilities by informing ICAO that they are unable to comply fully with ICAO standards. In practice they rarely do so, leaving totally unclear the degree to which member states are enforcing agreed norms.

Unilateralism increases as states seek to defend themselves in the face of unevenly enforced agreements.

The pervasiveness of dysfunctional multilateralism arguably has tended to push the international system toward increased unilateralism as states seek to defend themselves in the face of poor or asymmetrically enforced agreements. Canada, for example, eventually brought the issue of overfishing in the NAFO regulatory area to a head by unilaterally seizing the Spanish trawler *Estai* just outside the 200-mile limit, provoking a severe political crisis with the EU. The Canadians did not challenge the abusive, albeit legal, self-declared quotas allotted to Spain and Portugal, but by seizing the ship they were able to demonstrate that even with these quotas Spanish fishermen engaged in numerous practices that were prohibited under EU and international law. The EU reacted by charging Ottawa with an outrageous act of unilateralism and supporting Spain in a case against Canada in the International Court of Justice. There was a sense, however, in which this unilateralism had been brought on by the triply dysfunctional nature of NAFO as a multilateral arrangement — one whose membership and voting structure did not in any way reflect international legitimacy, in which the largest member systematically ignored scientific advice and abused an escape clause designed for occasional use, and in which the decisions of NAFO itself were rendered irrelevant by numerous technical violations of the type found on the *Estai*.

De facto unilateralism in the aviation sector began to arise in the early 1990s, when the United States started cracking down on unsafe foreign carriers flying into U.S. airspace. In 1992 the U.S. Federal Aviation

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[7]Donald Barry, "The Canada-EU Turbot War: Internal Politics and Transatlantic Bargaining," *International Journal* 53:2 (Spring 1998).

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Administration (FAA) announced an International Aviation Safety Assessment program in which it for the first time named those countries that in its view were not implementing and enforcing ICAO standards. Attempting to avoid charges that it was exercising extraterritorial regulatory powers over the carriers of other countries, the FAA emphasized that it was focusing on the ability of countries to fulfill their obligations, not of carriers to comply with what should have been nationally enforced requirements. But by skirting the national sovereignty principles on which ICAO was established, the FAA action led to a certain amount of international grumbling about U.S. unilateralism.

The most significant post-1945 examples of unilateral action in response to what had come to be seen as dysfunctional multilateralism were in the economic sphere and were taken by the United States: in 1971-1973, in engineering the breakdown of the Bretton Woods par value monetary system, and in the mid-1980s, by pursuing a trade policy of what one critic called "aggressive unilateralism." In both cases, U.S. unilateralism was driven by a sense that the existing multilateral system had become unsustainable in its then-current form and that efforts to reform by multilateral means had proven unsuccessful. In recent years, however, European governments also have begun to react with unilateral, and at times legally problematic, measures to multilateral arrangements that from *their* perspective are dysfunctional. The latter include WTO rules that do not give carte blanche to the "precautionary principle," ICAO rules that set global noise standards for aircraft engines above what urbanized Europeans regard as desirable, and, most recently, maritime laws that guarantee the rights of aging tankers to ply the seas around Europe. Not surprisingly, European governments are reluctant to acknowledge such unilateralism for what it is. Indeed, much of the rhetoric about a *future* system of governance characterized by a thick web of international rules and institutions tends to obscure the fact that, in the here and now, European countries and the EU as such often co-exist rather awkwardly with existing multilateral rules.

Institutions and compliance

If one of the responses by governments to dysfunctional multilateralism has been increased resort to unilateral action, the other has been toward higher levels of international institutionalization, with the aim of restoring multilateral cooperation at increased levels of compliance and improved functionality. The Nixon shocks of the early 1970s led to the reform of the IMF and the establishment of new institutional arrangements, notably the G-5 and the G-7. Similarly, the Reagan administration's unilateral responses to violations of the GATT by other countries led to the establishment of the WTO Dispute Settlement Body (DSB).

The same dynamic between dysfunctional multilateralism, unilateralism,

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and new forms of multilateral cooperation can be seen in the NAFO and ICAO cases. After the initial act of Canadian unilateralism and the EU's response, the *Estai* incident led to a stronger regional fisheries regime that satisfied the interests of both Canada and the EU. Canada formally acknowledged the right of EU fleets to fish in the waters off its coast and confirmed an increased share of the turbot catch. In return, it received a stronger surveillance and inspection regime that helped to eliminate the kinds of abuses committed by the *Estai*. Similarly, FAA pressure on other countries to observe their own Chicago Convention commitments helped to launch new multilateral efforts to improve the international aviation safety regime. In 1998 the ICAO members approved a Universal Safety Oversight program, albeit one that still requires the consent of any state for an audit. In these and similar cases, the erstwhile unilateralist agrees to limit its freedom of action to secure better performance from other states in a given policy area.

There is no theory to explain why governments accept increased constraints to secure better compliance from others.

While there are numerous examples of this dynamic at work, there does not seem to be a coherent theory to explain why and under what circumstances governments accept increased constraints on their freedom of action to secure better compliance from other countries. Theoretically, delegation of sovereignty for this purpose can be ranged along a spectrum from least to most formal, least to most institutionalized. At a very rudimentary level, states may conclude treaties in which they undertake obligations without committing themselves to any formal mechanism for enforcement or review. Other treaties establish intergovernmental commissions to consider matters of compliance, as in the SALT I treaty with its Standing Consultative Commission. A further step toward institutionalization is to establish a mandatory peer review process, as in the 1994 Convention on Nuclear Safety adopted in response to post-communist revelations about safety problems in Soviet-built power plants.

A yet more ambitious step is to establish autonomous institutional mechanisms for investigating potential violations and adjudicating disputes — for example, the DSB. Such arrangements go a considerable way toward creating quasi-supranational bodies that sit in judgment on the parties themselves. Implementation of decisions ultimately remains a matter for the signatories, however, and is not automatic or self-enforcing. At the very high end of this spectrum, mechanisms to ensure compliance take on characteristics of full supranationality, able to enforce decisions and actions against states or nationals of states without the political concurrence of those states. The ICC clearly moves furthest in this direction in that it sets up an independent prosecutor and a supporting bureaucracy that is empowered to investi-

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gate, indict, and try individuals with little in the way of prior political authorization from the states involved.

One of the more curious features of post-Cold War multilateral diplomacy has been the extremely uneven way in which the international community has empowered international institutions to address problems of implementation and enforcement. It has been willing to establish an ICC with sweeping powers even as it remains reluctant to create international bodies that, for example, could conduct mandatory inspections of fishing fleets widely suspected of flouting international rules, of nuclear power plants known to pose safety hazards, or of certification procedures for civil aviation fleets with disastrous safety records. This pattern suggests that the development of international institutions designed to enforce cooperation is an arbitrary process, at best driven by political fashion and the pressures of NGOs rather than any systematic thinking about world order, at worst a process marked by the narrow pursuit of national interest — one in which governments are willing to pool sovereignty on abstract issues that are unlikely ever to affect them very much but in which they guard their national prerogatives when real commercial or political interests are at stake. In extreme form, this pattern can be seen in the behavior of microstates that purport to contribute to multilateralism by such essentially meaningless acts as adhering to agreements on nuclear testing and nonproliferation but dig in their heels on issues closer to home such as bank secrecy, tax evasion, or money laundering.

The relationship between compliance and institutions is yet another area in which U.S. and EU practices diverge. The United States tends to be concerned about practical results and compliance with existing law while the EU focuses more on establishing institutions to promote long-term convergence of behavior, often with limited regard to how rules are monitored or enforced. Thus, at the November 2001 BWC review conference, the EU was at the forefront of efforts to establish a new international organization to foster compliance. In contrast, the United States highlighted the failure of the international community to respond to instances of non-compliance with the BWC and called on countries to enact national legislation criminalizing biological weapons under domestic law.

Unilateralism and European integration

THE EU CLEARLY is more than an international institution, and its continued development (widening and deepening) raises important questions about the relationship between multilateralism and European integration. European officials and commentators tend to accept as an article of faith that Europe, because of its experience since the 1950s, is inherently multilateralist. This view is shared by many U.S. observers, both those on the "left" who deplore the perceived unilateralism of U.S. policy and hold up Europe as a counterexample and those on the "right" who

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contrast the naïve multilateralism of Europe with the more realistic unilateralism with which the United States approaches the world.[8]

Clearly there is something to the argument that small countries are more inclined than large ones to look to international solutions to policy problems. But extending this argument to the EU as a whole is questionable. As European leaders themselves emphasize, a key goal of the integration process is to increase the weight of the Union so that it can become a more influential force on the international level. EU internal decision-making patterns also are very different from those that apply in relations with the outside world. Internally, the EU has developed habits of restraint that respect the domestic difficulties of individual member states; decision-making by consensus is highly prized. Externally, the EU is increasingly known for a "take-it-or-leave-it" style of negotiation, as exemplified in the accession process with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, in trade and fishing negotiations with developing countries, and in the rigid stances taken with the United States in recent multilateral negotiations on world order issues. Internally, the EU's policing of legislation is ex post, belated, and ineffective. Externally, the EU has proven to be an extremely litigious actor, insisting on rigorous ex ante policing of even potential infringements of international agreements in the WTO and elsewhere.

As in all political systems, hypocrisy and opportunism in the EU shape policy and may account for some of the contrasts between the union's internal and external behavior. More fundamentally, however, there is a genuine tension between the EU's perception of itself as an inherently multilateralist actor and its need to assert its identity and demarcate itself from the rest of the world through measures that, from an *outside* perspective at least, can appear starkly unilateral. It could in fact be argued that the entire course of integration policy since the 1950s has been characterized by a pattern of what might be called "structural unilateralism" — a rejection of external, and especially U.S., attempts to extend bilateral or multilateral controls over the European integration process. This pattern was evident in resistance to GATT interference with steps seen as necessary to complete the common and single markets, in the defense of the CAP as part of the political underpinning of the EU, in rejection of external constraints on preferential trade agreements regarded as vital to the development of an EU external policy, in rejection of various U.S. calls for a post-Cold War "seat at the table," in the development of a CFSP and ESDP to which NATO has been asked to adapt and readapt itself repeatedly since 1991, and above all in the enlargement process, in which the EU has resisted external interference in matters relating

[8]See Robert Keohane, "Ironies of Sovereignty: The European Union and the United States," *Journal of Common Market Studies* 40:4 (November 2002); and Robert Kagan, "Power and Weakness," *Policy Review* 113 (June-July 2002).

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to timing or the eligibility of countries for membership. This structural unilateralism is also enshrined in European jurisprudence, as the European Court of Justice (ECJ) has upheld the European Commission's contention that member states have an obligation to renounce or renegotiate treaties with third countries that conflict with the EU's founding treaties as well as EU directives and regulations.

At present, the EU seems profoundly ambivalent about whether it is an emerging "superpower" that, in order to take its place as a partner of or counterweight to the United States, must engage in still more and more vigorous such unilateral action to build its external profile and to demarcate itself from the rest of the world (to become, as Hans Morgenthau might have phrased it, a more "impenetrable" actor in the international system with a heightened sense of sovereignty), or whether it is the kernel of a new, post-Westphalian system of global governance in which sovereignty as such is a wasting asset. The ambivalence at the heart of European thinking about multilateralism and world order makes it very difficult for the EU to establish a coherent and consistent line with regard to many of the key conceptual issues — the role of norms versus numbers, for example, or the importance of universality — crucial to the future of multilateralism. The textbook view that European integration is marked by unique elements of supranationalism that distinguish it from the intergovernmentalism reflected in virtually all other forms of international cooperation is, as Andrew Moravcsik and others have argued, far too simple. Insofar, however, as there is some validity to the EU's distinctive claim to a supranational identity, recent years have witnessed a strange inversion in which member states seem to be clawing back sovereignty through reassertion of intergovernmental mechanisms within Europe even as the EU has become the leading exponent of a kind of global supranationalism. Governments have become increasingly cautious about ceding powers to the ECJ within Europe even as they seem unperturbed by the potential loss of national prerogative to such bodies as the ICC, which causes such consternation in the Bush administration. Similarly, European member states apparently see no contradiction between the ferocious intra-European disputes at Nice over the precise allocation of weighted votes in the Council of Ministers, the qualified majority voting threshold, and the circumstances under which the new "triple majority" would come into play and, to cite the ICC example once again, the fact that this particular product of global multilateralism has been firmly rejected by the three largest countries in the world.

The EU seems profoundly ambivalent about whether it is an emerging superpower.

It could be argued that there is a realpolitik method in this seeming madness. With the EU effectively wielding a bloc of 30 to 35 or more votes in

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international forums, it makes perfect sense for member states to stress "numbers" externally even as they emphasize "norms" at home. Another factor may be the political problems associated with globalization and the pressures it puts on governments to try to hold on to certain powers at the national level (to impose tough restrictions on crime and immigration, for example) while at the same time stressing to voters through active international policies that certain problems can be solved only at the global level through mechanisms such as Kyoto and the ICC. Whatever the most likely explanation (or explanations), there clearly is a huge agenda for exploring in more depth the evolving relationship between European integration (and regional integration in general) and the future of multilateralism.

Who decides?

MULTILATERALISM RAISES complex questions to which there are no simple black-and-white answers. While unilateralism undoubtedly exists in U.S. policy, it is not a new phenomenon, one that is unique to the United States, or one that in all cases is dysfunctional with regard to world order. Unilateralism also is present in Europe and may even be considered a structural factor in how the EU interacts with the outside world.

Europeans are right to warn that strong transatlantic ties depend upon a continued U.S. commitment to multilateral cooperation. However, the EU and its member states cannot expect to be the sole arbiters of what constitutes unilateral or multilateral behavior. Transatlantic relations would be well served by a more intellectually sophisticated dialogue, at both the official and unofficial levels, on what multilateralism is, when it does and does not work, and how it can best serve European, U.S., and third-country interests.

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From Sarajevo to September 11

The future of globalization

By JOHN MICKLETHWAIT AND ADRIAN WOOLDRIDGE

ON THE MORNING of June 28, 1914, the world could rejoice in 60 years of extraordinary peace and progress. The first great age of globalization had made the world seem an infinitely smaller place. So great were the twin powers of technology (in the shape of the telephone, the telegram, the train, the car, electricity, the camera) and ideology (the gospel of free trade, guaranteed by the world's hegemonic power, Britain) that Edwardian intellectuals prophesied the end of all wars. Yet on that summer's day, one act of terrorism in Sarajevo — the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand and his wife by a Serbian fanatic called Gavrilo Princip — set off a sickening train of events. The world plunged into the most horrific war in history, and even

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John Micklethwait is United States editor of the Economist. *Adrian Wooldridge is the* Economist's *Washington correspondent. They are the authors of* A Future Perfect: The Challenge and Hidden Promise of Globalization. *This essay will appear in slightly different form as the preface to the second edition, to be published this month by Random House.* *Copyright 2003 by John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge.*

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after the killing had stopped, countries everywhere renounced their previous openness, fortifying their borders to limit the movement of goods, people, and even ideas.

It would be absurd to blame all the miseries of the first half of the twentieth century on a single act of terrorism: The causes of world war and protectionist folly had been germinating for years. But those causes became clear only in retrospect. John Maynard Keynes nicely describes the typical middle-class Londoner in 1914, "sipping his morning tea in bed" while ordering goods from around the world and planning his global investments. For such a man, "the projects and politics of militarism and imperialism, of racial and cultural rivalries, of monopolies, restriction and exclusions, which were to play the serpent to this paradise, were little more than the amusements in his daily newspaper." For such a man, and millions of others, Gavrilo Princip's two shots marked a turning point.

We debated shortening the section on bin Laden, lest people might think that we were paying too much attention to a marginal crank.

In the first edition of our book, *A Future Perfect: The Challenge and Hidden Promise of Globalization* (Random House, 2000), one of the figures we chose to illustrate the backlash against the current age of globalization was another terrorist: Osama bin Laden. Drawing on research by journalist Peter L. Bergen, who had interviewed bin Laden in Afghanistan, we quoted his fury against the "New World Order" that "haughty" America was imposing on the world. We noted that bin Laden, like so many other opponents of globalization, had been remarkably sophisticated about exploiting the process he professed to hate, using the latest technology to promote his medieval message. And we argued that, for all its other merits, lowering borders had made the West much more vulnerable to attack. We raised the possibility of al-Qaeda using a primitive nuclear bomb to blow up the World Trade Center.

At the time, this seemed a little far-fetched. We debated shortening the section on bin Laden, lest people might think that we were paying too much attention to the ramblings of a marginal crank. People were far more interested in the promise of open markets and technological innovation than they were in terrorism.

It was a heady time for supporters of globalization, particularly in the United States. The stock market continued to defy gravity. The standard indicators of globalization pointed skyward: The volume of global trade increased steadily in the decade through 2000, and foreign direct investment flows topped $1.3 trillion. Economists speculated about the birth of a "new economy" that had banished recessions for good. Gurus speculated about "Dow 36,000" — or whatever other number they plucked out of

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their hats. This was a time when Silicon Valley and Wall Street minted new millionaires every single day, when business-school graduates confidently expected to retire at 40 and begin a new career in philanthropy, and when the first signs of liberalization seemed to be awakening parts of the Third World. India and China were booming after decades of state-imposed stagnation.

Of course, there were serpents in this paradise, no less than there were in the world of Keynes's Londoner. Too many people in the developing world lived in grinding poverty. Too many people in the rich world were worried about losing their jobs. The anti-globalization movement won a huge propaganda victory when a 100,000-strong army of trade unionists and students succeeded in turning the 1999 meeting of the WTO into a farce. But most people found it easy to dismiss the Seattle protests (and their successors in Washington and Genoa) as a sideshow — cheap entertainment for students with too much money and too much time on their hands. Thousands of people might have turned out to protest against globalization, but hundreds of millions of people voted for governments that supported it.

A definition of globalization

How much of a reversal for globalization was September 11? To answer that question, we need to start by defining the term. One reason for the general confusion that surrounds this subject is that people have started to use the word "globalization" as shorthand for their entire philosophy of life. For high-flyers in Wall Street and Silicon Valley, it is a synonym for modernity; for French intellectuals (as for bin Laden), it means American domination; for Ralph Nader and Pat Buchanan, it means exactly the opposite: the emasculation of their country.

Our definition of globalization is rooted in freedom. Globalization is the ever-freer movement of goods, services, ideas, and people around the world. Two things about this definition are worth stressing. First, globalization is about more than just business; it is about culture and people. The Guggenheim in Bilbao is as much a symbol of globalization as DaimlerChrysler; so are the Albanian "asylum seekers" flocking into Britain. Globalization is certainly about the ratio of exports to gross domestic product. Yet it is also about the nonchalant way in which people under 30 make an international call; the cafes in Shanghai where you can get a decent cappuccino (and sometimes surf the internet); the way that Chinese teenagers can recognize Arnold Schwarzenegger and Michael Jordan; the clothes people wear; or even the fact that in the Himalayan hamlet of Lukla, people setting off for Everest are given French toast and Swiss muesli for breakfast, with American soft toilet paper to stuff in their pockets.

Second, globalization is a process rather than a fact or a structure. The forces driving globalization — the digitization of information, falling trade

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barriers, even the spread of pop music — are real enough, but they have left behind an economy that is much less integrated than either the proponents or critics of globalization admit. In some cases, observers have ignored what might be called "the undertow": the way in which the tide that seems to be bringing people together can also divide them into ever smaller groups. For instance, multi-channel television has spawned not only global networks such as CNN and MTV, but also countless small local "community" stations. The ease with which big-city newspapers can produce different editions for different local markets usually means that they cut back foreign news.

People who talk excitedly about an unprecedented era of globalization should read more history. By some measures, the world is not much more integrated than it was before Princip stepped out of the crowd in Sarajevo. Much of the final quarter of the twentieth century was spent merely recovering ground lost in the previous 75 years — and today's "global village" still effectively excludes billions of people. Most of the world's citizens live on less than $10 a day; most don't have access to phones; four out of every five have never traveled further than 100 miles from their home.

People who talk excitedly about an unprecedented era of globalization should read more history.

Even when you look at trade among rich countries, many markets for products still stop at national borders. A Canadian province trades 12 times as many goods and 40 times as many services with another Canadian province than it does with an American state of similar size and proximity, according to a Brookings Institution study. In the supposedly open European Union, people are still six times more likely to trade with their countrymen. Industries are deeply rooted in certain bits of the globe: There are plenty of cheaper places to locate a film industry than Hollywood, but none that has the same collection of people. A surprising number of the most humdrum products come from local sources. Nearly all of America's light bulbs are still made in the U.S., largely because transport costs are too high to justify moving the factories elsewhere.

The uneven nature of globalization helps to explain why it is often a cruel process. In our book, we looked at some of those who have lost out as a result of globalization: the car workers in Flint, the people of South Korea and Russia in the wake of the Asian contagion, the wretchedly poor Gobetti family in a favela in Sao Paulo. But these casualties do not stop globalization from being a process worth defending.

By any economic measure yet invented, globalization has enriched the world. Far more people suffer from too little globalization than too much (not least because of the barriers that the First World erects against Third World products). Once again the central issue is freedom: Any process that increases the number of legal choices that are open to people (even if those

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choices are as mundane as the right to drink Coca-Cola or surf the internet) should command support. Indeed, it is precisely those sorts of mundane freedoms that people like bin Laden detest most.

The al Qaeda effect

OSAMA BIN LADEN changed the debate about globalization in three important ways. First, the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon revealed the soft underbelly of globalization — the way that the very tools of globalization can be turned against it. The passenger jet, which had hitherto been celebrated for bringing the world together, became a horrific weapon of destruction. Towers that were built to glorify both world trade and American power were destroyed in less than an hour; now pictures of them symbolize American insecurity. Bin Laden even bastardized some of the language of globalization. "Networks" and "cells" used to be the stuff of trendy management theories. Now they have a more ominous ring.

Second, September 11 has made it harder for goods, people, and services to cross borders. Air travel has become more bothersome, and airfreight more expensive. America's airports are currently struggling to install between 2,000 and 5,000 bomb-detecting devices, each costing about $1 million. America wants to force importers to "check in" their inbound containers at secure foreign ports so they can be cleared before reaching American waters. As for immigrants, America's system of "don't ask, don't tell," which the terrorists exploited, will surely have to be revised. In Europe, xenophobic politicians are already using September 11 as a further excuse for protesting against immigrants from North Africa and the Middle East.

The biggest question about September 11, however, is the Sarajevo one: Was the attack on the World Trade Center one of history's turning points? Are we witnessing the end of a process of global integration that has been gathering pace for decades? Many of globalization's opponents certainly think so. John Gray, one of the most intelligent globophobes, argued just a few days after September 11 that "the era of globalization is over. The entire view of the world that supported the market's faith in globalization has melted down."

Consider the case for pessimism. Bin Laden's timing could not have been better. The year 2001 produced something new in the current era of globalization: "synchronous sinking," as all the world's major economies slowed down at the same time and the major indices of global integration stood still. World trade, which grew by 7 percent annually throughout the 1990s, remained almost stagnant. Foreign direct investment slumped from $1.3 trillion to barely half that. Almost all of this was the result of the business cycle rather than terrorism, but the coincidence was unfortunate.

The same goes for the economic crisis of 2002, which Alan Blinder, a for-

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mer vice chairman of the Federal Reserve Board, described as the biggest loss of confidence in the markets since 1929. The collapse of Enron and WorldCom, the revelations about shoddy bookkeeping, the deconstruction of the Orwellian world of stock market analysis (where "buy" meant "maybe," "hold" meant "sell," and "sell" meant "run like hell"): All these things gave people around the world an excuse to question shareholder capitalism, which many saw as synonymous with globalization, and to jeer at the pampered princes of America's New Economy who had once lorded it over them. Suddenly, an American president, not an Indonesian one, was fending off allegations of crony capitalism. Much of this represented the continuing deflation of the dot-com bubble; but when the market loses more than a trillion dollars in a single month, as it did in July 2002, it is hard not to ask serious questions about the way the system works. And there is no doubt that there were serious weaknesses to be addressed — particularly in the auditing world.

Suddenly, an American president, not an Indonesian one, was fending off allegations of crony capitalism.

The pain was not just in the United States. In the mid-1990s, Argentina had been hailed as an example of the benefits of global integration, opening up much of its economy to foreigners; but in December 2001, it defaulted on $155 billion of debt. The country's collapse into political and economic chaos sent the middle class onto the streets banging their pots and pans. By 2002, many of Argentina's biggest states and cities were printing their own currencies. An economy that had once been among the world's most sophisticated had been reduced to something akin to medieval barter. Brazil also looked vulnerable. As for Zimbabwe, another erstwhile model, it already seemed to have fallen over the precipice.

For the pessimist, there is also much to worry about in the political core of globalization — the transatlantic alliance. From the earliest days of the new American administration, Europe never particularly warmed to George W. Bush, a man who had seldom bothered to travel abroad, despite his father's cosmopolitan CV. For his part, the new president seemed determined to pursue a unilateral course, shrugging off both the Kyoto treaty and the Anti-Ballistic Missile treaty. In the aftermath of September 11, Europe rallied to America, invoking Article 5 of the NATO treaty (which holds that an attack on one is an attack on all) for the first time ever. But by 2002, the alliance was feuding over all manner of things, from the reconstruction of Afghanistan to the possible invasion of Iraq. Relations were particularly strained over the Middle East, Europeans sympathizing with the Palestinians and Americans with Israel. Perhaps these differences can be papered over; but pessimists can still point to the growing strains between two powers that feel they need each other less and less. The Pentagon wonders about the use-

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fulness of European troops, with their outdated equipment and "appeasement-minded" political masters; European politicians, newly emboldened by the euro, wonder about the merits of supporting a country that refuses to listen to their advice (and that is also, they add quietly, largely to blame for its problems in the Islamic world).

This divergence is economic as well as political. In 2002, in a blatant attempt to win votes in the Rust Belt, President Bush imposed tariffs on steel imports. This calamitous decision undermined the Doha trade round, provoked threats of retaliation from Europe, and made a mockery of his professed support for free trade. If an American president couldn't stand up for his principles with his approval ratings close to record levels, when could he stand up for them? Soon afterwards Bush signed a $170 billion agriculture bill that comes close to matching Europe's Common Agriculture Policy in the harm that it inflicts on trade in general and the developing world in particular. Despite a quarter-century of globalization, the Western world now spends $1 billion a day on agricultural protection of one sort or another, depriving the poor world of the market that it most craves. The fact that the president then had the nerve to go to Monterey to boast about an increase in American aid to the developing world (which, in fact, still leaves the world's richest country well behind other donors) only added insult to injury.

Despite a quarter-century of globalization, the Western world now spends $1 billion a day on agricultural protection.

These are real grounds for worry. Yet there are also reasons for hope, which begin with the fact that September 11 provided a bracing dose of reality. In the heady days of the 1990s, globophiles insisted that the process was unstoppable. How could people think of resisting the law of comparative advantage? And how could they contemplate putting the genie of technological advance back in the bottle? Too many Americans believed in a bastardized version of Francis Fukuyama's thesis of the end of history: that the triumph of Western liberalism was inevitable, that politics no longer matters, that all they needed to do to produce utopia was tend to their stock portfolios. Today people have a renewed appreciation for the importance of nation-states and their armies. The invisible hand sometimes needs the help of the chain-mailed fist.

The sheer horror of September 11 also conceals an important fact: By most measures, Islamic fundamentalism is the weakest of all the threats that globalization has yet faced. Socialism, the main ideological opponent of liberalism for most of the past century, combined a searing analysis of contemporary injustices with a compelling promise of a better future. Whatever its defects, Marxism spoke to the genuine discontents of millions of workers. It

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also attracted some of the finest minds in the West — particularly during the dark days of the 1930s when capitalism was plagued by depression and unemployment. Half a century ago communism held sway over at least a sixth of the world's population.

Socialism also had a profound influence on plenty of democratic leaders who would never have described themselves as Marxists. In the 1940s and 1950s, European social democrats happily nationalized the commanding heights of the economy and restricted the free movement of capital; in the developing world, many leftish leaders went further and opposed free trade in goods in the name of "import substitution." The results may have been regrettable — India's domestic version of Coca-Cola was one of the most disgusting drinks invented by man — but they were the work of democratically elected leaders, with the firm backing of many economists.

By comparison, radical Islam seems a much weaker opponent. Rather than offering a futuristic workers' paradise, it looks back to the primitive world of the seventh century. The regime that came closest to embodying the radical ideal was the Taliban in Afghanistan. Even capitalism's harshest critics are unlikely to fashion an alternative out of a society that denied women education and debated whether the proper way to deal with homosexuals was to push them off tall buildings or throw them into holes and put stone walls on top of them.

This is not to say that radical Islam lacks popular appeal. Large numbers of Muslims expressed delight at the events of September 11 (and even larger numbers argue that the atrocity was not perpetrated by Muslims). Huge numbers of Muslims in the West are alienated from their host societies and attracted to fundamentalism. Throughout the Arab world, authoritarian regimes try to distract popular attention from their own failures by blaming all the ills of the world on American foreign policy, especially its support for Israel. This is a dangerous brew: It provides groups like al Qaeda not just with a supply of raw recruits, but also with a sympathetic milieu in which to hide.

The continuing success of globalization depends on the willingness of the United States to stamp out terrorism and the grievances that underpin it. That war involves not just stepping up covert operations against al Qaeda and disposing of Saddam Hussein, but also doing more to prevent nuclear proliferation and resuming the search for peace in the Middle East.

This is a colossal challenge. Yet the threat from radical Islam is still less serious than the one posed by the Soviet Union during the Cold War. Radical Islam has been relatively unsuccessful in turning itself into a coherent political force. The Taliban is gone. The mullahs are rapidly losing their grip on Iran. (Iraq is a secular rather than an Islamic regime.) Islam became a powerful political force because it combined three social groups: businessmen and professionals who were unhappy with their lot, the disenchanted urban young, and Islamic clerics and intellectuals. The rise of bin Ladenism has fractured this alliance: The more radicals rely on terrorism, the less main-

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stream Muslims are inclined to give them wholehearted support.

It is impossible to argue that the whole world faces a choice between Islam and liberal capitalism in the same way that it once faced a choice between capitalism and communism. Yet this is small comfort. The main threat to globalization comes from within: from Western politicians arguing about things like steel, movies, and the Middle East and from Western workers getting tired of the unrelenting (if productive) pressure that globalization places on all of us. So far, that pressure has been applied primarily to blue-collar workers, but it is now affecting the professional classes. The fuss about steel imports will be as nothing compared to the furor when lawyers, accountants, and even doctors discover that their work can be "outsourced" to India.

This matters because, much of the time, advocates of globalization are wrestling with human nature. The steel-tariff decision perfectly illustrates how difficult it is to persuade people to care as much about the global as they do about the local. Bush backed the steel lobby for the sake of a few votes in West Virginia, Ohio, and Pennsylvania — just as, three years earlier, Bill Clinton caved in before protestors in Seattle because he was worried about shoring up labor support for Al Gore.

In his other great work, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*, Adam Smith compared the pain that you would feel if you lost your little finger to the distress that you would feel over the news that "the great empire of China, with all its myriads of inhabitants, was suddenly swallowed up by an earthquake." You would be hugely shocked, he said. You would express your sorrow. You would reflect on the precariousness of life. You might even "enter into many reasonings concerning the effects which this disaster might produce upon the commerce of Europe, and the trade and business of the world in general." But you would sleep soundly, and go about your business.

The first rule of political life is that all politics is local. People are far more easily moved by their own immediate concerns — by the state of their fingers — than they are by the fate of millions of people in a distant corner of the earth. That is why it is so easy to imagine the current phase of liberalization running out of steam. And that is why it is more important than ever for supporters of globalization to speak out in favor of the endangered process.

A call to arms

TOO OFTEN, SUPPORTERS of globalization seem to be on the defensive. Public debate on the subject is carried out largely on the enemy's terms. The backdrop is usually a shuttered textile factory rather than a young African child sitting at a computer, a burning Amazonian forest rather than a young Brazilian investment banker, a scene

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from *Star Wars* rather than a shot of the Guggenheim in Bilbao. At times, the defenders of globalization seem crass: The Wall Street analyst on CNBC who expressed delight that the 1997-98 Asian currency crisis was "really beginning to hurt" springs to mind. More often, they are silent. In particular, the wide class of people who have gained most obviously from globalization — call them the Cosmocrats — have almost made a vocation out of excluding themselves from local political debate.

Their defense of globalization should begin with economics. Put simply, the more open any economy is, the quicker it tends to grow. Before 1980, globalization was concentrated largely in the rich world. Since then, it has moved to the developing world with massively beneficial results. The World Bank reports that in the 1990s, even allowing for the Asian crisis, GDP per person in the 24 more globalized developing countries (i.e., those with a higher ratio of trade to national income, such as Mexico and China) rose at an average rate of 5 percent a year, more than twice the rate in the rich world; meanwhile, GDP per person fell by 1 percent in the less globalized developing countries (many of which were in Africa). Needless to say, literacy and life expectancy also rose in the globalizing countries, which were home to 3 billion people (against 2 billion in the less globalized ones, where poverty has increased).

Put simply, the more open any economy is, the quicker it tends to grow.

Confronted with such compelling evidence that open borders help developing countries, anti-globalists usually shift their ground. They argue, first, that globalization harms the poor and, second, that it promotes inequality. The first of these arguments is dubious. Some poor people have been harmed by globalization, and many more have seen disgracefully few benefits, but there is no hard evidence that the poor as a whole suffer disproportionately. Another World Bank study, of 80 countries over the past 40 years, demonstrates that the incomes of the poor have risen with those of everybody else. The Fraser Institute also points to a more general connection between freedom and prosperity: In 2000, the income of the poorest tenth in the least free countries was a miserable $728; the figure for the poorest tenth in the freest countries was 10 times as high. And fewer of us are really poor: The proportion of people living on less than $1 a day fell from 20 percent in 1970 to 5 percent in 1998.

What about inequality? There is no doubt that it has increased in many countries, but it is hard to find a specific link to trade policy. The poorest 10 percent of people in countries the world over have to make do with 2 percent to 3 percent of national income, the *Economist* has reported (June 22, 2002), regardless of whether their economies are open or closed. In the rich world, the rise in inequality has more to do with new technology than with lower trade barriers. One study shows that technology was five times more

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important than trade in widening inequality in America in 1973-1993. In the steel industry sleeker mini-mills and computerized production systems have cost thousands of Americans their jobs. Yet politicians are unwilling to risk being called Luddites by condemning technology.

These dry statistics tend to understate the human effect of liberalization. When developing countries have agreed to open up their economies — be it South Korea in the 1970s and 1980s or China in the 1980s and 1990s — the gains in well-being have been phenomenal. Deng's market reforms of the 1980s brought the biggest and most rapid eradication of poverty that the world has ever seen: Several hundred million peasants climbed out of a life that had consisted of little more than the relentless struggle to stay alive.

As we have already conceded, these aggregate figures disguise a lot of individual losers. Globalization destroys some jobs in the same remorseless way the industrial revolution once did, but it also creates many more. Mourning the jobs lost in Detroit seems a little like regretting the departure of horse-drawn carriages (which Detroit did so much to speed). And it also forgets the jobs created in places like San Caetano, Brazil, where General Motors has a factory and has helped push up both local wages and labor standards. There is nothing odd in this. Typically, the average wage at the foreign affiliates of multinationals is 1.5 times the local average; in the case of low-income countries, the figure is double the local domestic manufacturing wage. These factories may pay less than they do in Western countries — sometimes disgracefully so — but usually they push up living standards, bring in skills, and increase the choices open to local consumers.

Time and again in debating this subject, we encounter common assumptions about globalization that are simply false. How many times, for instance, have you heard that globalization favors big companies — indeed, that it is encouraging a "silent takeover" in which companies are becoming more powerful than governments?

In fact, globalization mainly favors smaller companies because it allows them to reach markets that were previously monopolized by multinationals. In most developed economies smaller firms have been gaining ground at the expense of larger ones. Far from being undermined by globalization, governments have been growing steadily in size over the past quarter of a century. The "fact," popular in anti-globalization circles, that companies accounted for 51 of the world's 100 biggest economies relies on comparing the sales of companies with the GDP of countries. But GDP is a measure of value added, not sales. Using a measure for value added for companies, only 37 multinationals appeared in the 100 biggest economies in the world in 2000. That still sounds reasonably impressive; yet only two companies scrape into the top 50 (Wal-Mart in forty-fourth place and Exxon in forty-eighth). Wal-Mart was barely a quarter of the size of Belgium. But, again, what does that mean in terms of power? Wal-Mart has no powers of coercion; it cannot tax, raise armies, or imprison people. In each of the countries where it operates, it has to bow down to local governments.

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Such facts need to be voiced more loudly. Yet merely choosing a better defensive position is not really good enough. Proving that globalization is, on balance, a good thing that has generally enriched the world economically is certainly valuable, but the same could also be said for the lavatory or the lemon squeezer. To engender any political support, globalization needs a surer political base, a reason to believe in it rather than merely to tolerate it.

Liberty, fraternity, globality

TO OUR MIND, globalization is not just an economic process that can be more or less squeezed into the mould of classical liberal political theory; it marks a significant development of that theory. John Stuart Mill advocated the largest possible measure of individual freedom as long as it did not involve harming others. So far, most of the battles that have been fought in freedom's name have involved political tyranny of one sort or another. Globalization has undoubtedly lent powerful support in that struggle — not only by helping to topple corrupt autocrats like the Suhartos of Indonesia, but also by casting light into the darker corners of the world. It is not coincidental that the pace of globalization has picked up with the spread of democratic rights; the two are symbiotic. Yet globalization also widens the concept of what the maximum degree of individual freedom might be.

Classical liberalism relies on the notion that there is a kind of contract between a government and its citizens, a contract into which individuals freely enter and may freely leave. In practical terms, that proposal has been (and still largely remains) a farce. For billions of people who live in countries that are wretchedly poor, isolated, or tyrannically ruled, there is little choice at all. But even in rich, democratic countries, most of us have faced at least two sorts of practical constraint. The first sort are all the things that make rejecting the social contract and leaving the place where you were born difficult — the rules governing where you can live, your ability to remain in touch with family, friends, even soccer teams. To the extent that globalization reduces this tyranny of place, it makes migration more likely to be a matter of choice rather than despair, and even if you do not move, it still provides choices where none existed before. Rather than being the worst sort of prix fixe menu with only one option for every course (you will live in Germany, eat German food, shop in German shops, watch German sport), it presents a wider range of options. Thanks to globalization, a Berliner can, if he so chooses, eat Moroccan food, read the *New York Times* on the internet, and visit Paris without changing money or producing a passport.

Put in these terms, it can sound a little trivial, but the underlying point is not. Globalization increases people's freedom to shape their own identities rather than assuming those of their ancestors. Of course, as communitarians point out, there are trade-offs between the comforts of community and the

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virtues of mobility — but those are surely trade-offs that individuals should calculate for themselves. It is hardly surprising that globalization scares authoritarians (such as Lee Kwan Yew, who once pronounced that "to us in Asia, the individual is an ant"), not to mention wild-eyed fundamentalists such as bin Laden.

Indeed, supporters of globalization should realize that the Islamic world represents an opportunity as well as a threat. The fundamental problem in the region is more than just poverty. Remember that bin Laden inherited millions, that many of the September 11 hijackers were university graduates, that Saudi Arabia controls a fifth of the world's oil reserves, and that the Arab world has less abject poverty (defined as an income of less than $1 a day) than any other developing region, thanks in part to Islamic traditions of charitable giving. The fundamental problem is a lack of economic and political freedom.

A report from the United Nations Development Programme in 2002 ranked the Arab world lowest out of seven regions in the world, with abysmal standards for civil liberties, political processes, and media independence. The wave of democracy that washed over much of the developing world (particularly Latin America) during the past decade has passed the Arab world by. The region's autocratic rulers, whether they dignify themselves with the title of president or king, give up authority only when they die. Women are denied basic economic and political rights. Not one of the Arab states that are commonly accused of spawning terrorism is a member of the World Trade Organization. All of them are dominated by intrusive states and freeloading kleptocracies, and all of them are locked in a pattern of relative decline.

This illiberalism is ruining any chance the Arab world might have of providing a decent life for its citizens, condemning the region to long-term economic decline and spawning an alienated and underemployed middle class. The non-oil-related GDP of the entire Arab world is about the same as the GDP of Finland. Between 1985 and 1998, real average income per head declined in Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, the United Arab Emirates, and Yemen. It can hardly be accidental that the Muslim-dominated countries that have actually succeeded in offering a better life to their citizens have also been the ones that have been the most democratic and the most open to free trade. The most successful of them all, Turkey, has been a secular state since 1928.

The lesson of a terrible century

None of this is meant to imply that the Western brand of globalization is a perfect model. It is not. There are clearly manifold problems — from the governance of companies like Enron and WorldCom that allow chief executives to behave like tawdry pirates to

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the persistence of poverty in the developing world. Fixing all these problems requires an active role for government.

One of the few things that the left and right agree about is that globalization diminishes the importance of government. They are both wrong. There is no statistical relation between the globalness of an economy and the size of its state: Sweden and Denmark are two of the most open economies in the world (with a ratio of imports to national income roughly double that of the United States), but their governments both account for more than 50 percent of GDP — way above the level in America.

The truth is the opposite: Globalization actually increases the importance of government, in at least three ways. First, markets depend on transparency and the rule of law, things that only governments can provide. The scandals now engulfing American capitalism only underline how important those rules should be. There is nothing illiberal about a government demanding that the accountants who audit companies should be rotated. The same need for competent government applies in spades in the developing world: As Hernando de Soto has argued, merely giving people basic property rights (their home and the opportunity to borrow against it) could unleash trillions of dollars of capital.

Markets depend on transparency and the rule of law, things that only governments can provide.

Second, governments have a preeminent role to play in ameliorating the downside of globalization. Like any other efficiency-producing device, globalization mercilessly exaggerates any weaknesses that it encounters. Forcing countries, companies, and people to compete with the best in the world imposes huge strains. Faulty policies — be it Brazil's push into deforesting the Amazon or Thailand's adoption of a fixed-rate currency system — are rapidly exposed in a world of mobile information and capital. The doctrine of comparative advantage is a harsh one if you possess little but comparative disadvantages.

So far, politicians have usually been less innovative than businesspeople in dealing with the relentless pressure to compete. Some of the necessary changes (such as making pensions in Western countries portable) are merely fiddly. Others (for instance, changing American schools or European universities) require a more fundamental review of the traditional role of governments. Wouldn't America's urban schools be more efficient if parents were given vouchers? And wouldn't Europe's universities be more successful if they weren't so dependent on the state?

The third area where Western governments have an important role is in coping with Third World poverty. As we have already mentioned, Western countries could contribute enormously by opening their economies to poor-country imports. It is scandalous that agriculture and textiles, the two things most poor countries most want to export, are also the areas with the highest

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tariffs in the West. The Third World needs more than this. It has fallen too far behind.

Many non-governmental organizations think the answer is to tilt trade rules — to make trade "fairer" by, for instance, only admitting imports produced by workers with "decent" wages. This is a recipe for hidden protectionism — for preventing the developing world from trading its way out of poverty. Instead, the simplest way to help the Third World is to do so directly — by giving money and advice. Debt forgiveness could be dramatically expanded at relatively little cost to the West. Far too little thought has gone into global philanthropy.

To many Westerners, these issues might seem like a sideshow. Africa is a long way away, and there is a war against terrorism to be fought. History, however, argues that complacency is always punished — be it a Londoner in 1914 sipping his tea in bed or a Californian hunched over a cappuccino in Starbucks in 1998.

We began by comparing September 11 to Sarajevo, but the underlying causes of the failure 100 years ago went deeper — and were rooted in the complacency of the winners of the first age of globalization. A decade before Princip made his fateful move, the Salvation Army threw a dinner party at Madison Square Garden. The stadium's lights beamed down on thousands of poor people tucking into free food. The rich hired boxes and galleries to savor their philanthropy. Everybody sang "Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow." It was hailed by the Salvation Army Commander as "the dawning of a new era, the bridging of a gulf between the rich and poor."

Over the next quarter-century the masses at the trestle tables turned on the elite in the galleries. The icons of American capitalism — the Rockefellers, Morgans, and Vanderbilts — were denounced as "robber barons" and "malefactors of great wealth." Even before Sarajevo, antitrust policy was being used to cut them down to size and higher taxes to narrow the inequalities they had created. World War I provided a spur for more state intervention. The stock market crash of 1929 (also "their" fault) led the government to interfere even more in business. Then came the Depression, which helped neither the rich nor the poor.

To avoid such a fate, the world requires better leadership. We have many reasons to regret the title of our book (*A Future Perfect*) since September 11. In some ways a more honest title would be *A Future Contingent*. We continue to believe that globalization can produce a much better world for the vast majority of people, but it will not do so simply as the automatic result of technology. The future is contingent upon the quality of our political leaders in Washington, London, and the other capitals of the world. Globalization promises a better world, but we have to build it.

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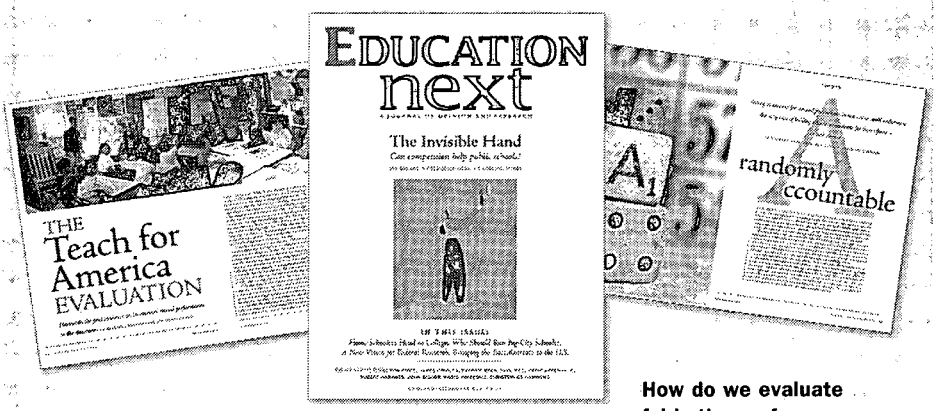

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Prevention Programs And Scientific Nonsense

By D.M. GORMAN

In NOVEMBER 2001, a bizarre incident occurred at a conference sponsored by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) in Washington, D.C. As reported by Stanley Kurtz on *National Review Online* (December 5 and 11, 2001) and Sally Satel on *Tech Central Station* (December 7, 2001), Christina Hoff Sommers of the American Enterprise Institute was invited to address an assembled audience of CSAP staff, grantees, and consultants concerning the agency's intentions to fund "Boy Talk," a prevention program for young men designed to influence such behaviors as drug use and violence. Sommers is a critic of this type of gender-specific exercise in health education, and suggested to the CSAP audience that the effectiveness of such programs and the commitment of dollars to them should be informed by scientific evidence regarding their effectiveness. She observed that "Girl Power!" — the program on which "Boy Talk" was based — remained unsupported by empirical evidence despite having been the recipient of federal funds for the past six years. At this point, a CSAP official informed Sommers that she should end her pre-

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sentation, apparently because the "Girl Power!" program was off limits. Whether Sommers had been informed of this taboo before she began her talk is not clear, but given the association between the two programs it seems reasonable that the experiences concerning one be used to inform implementation of the other. Anyway, Sommers appears to have soldiered on with her presentation, for within minutes she was apparently instructed to "shut the f--- up, bitch" by a member of the audience, causing much merriment among the assembled group of professionals.

Over the summer, I had a similar, although not as overtly censorial or hostile, experience while presenting at the Tenth Annual Meeting of the Society for Prevention Research in Seattle, Washington. While nobody dropped the F-bomb on me or called me "bitch," the response to my attempt to examine the scientific base of some widely advocated prevention programs was an ad hominem attack coupled with defensive arguments justifying the violation of basic tenets of evaluation practice in prevention research.

Science and the learned society

My presentation at the Society for Prevention Research conference focused on a list of drug and violence prevention programs deemed by an expert panel convened by the U.S. Department of Education's Safe, Disciplined, and Drug-Free Schools program to be "exemplary." According to the criteria used by this panel to define exemplary, there must be at least one evaluation that has demonstrated an effect on some violent or drug-related behavior, and this evidence must come from a "methodologically sound evaluation." In my presentation, I critiqued the Education Department's criteria through an examination of three of the programs that were conferred exemplary status — Project ALERT, the Second Step curriculum, and the Adolescent Training and Learning to Avoid Steroids (ATLAS) program. I pointed out what I considered to be serious methodological flaws in the evaluations of these programs, especially with regard to the recruitment and retention of participants and/or the use of questionable analytical techniques such as one-tail significance tests and post hoc sub-group analysis.

In addition, I noted that while there were indeed isolated effects on behavioral outcomes to be found in the evaluations of these programs, the preponderance of evidence showed that they had little or no effect on drug use or violence. For example, the evaluation of the violence prevention program Second Step produced only one statistically significant result out of the 20 outcomes that were assessed at final follow-up, while two evaluations of the ATLAS steroid prevention program failed to demonstrate any effects on steroid use.

The annual conference of the Society for Prevention Research seemed an appropriate venue to discuss such issues. After all, the society describes itself

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on its website as "an international scientific organization focused upon the advancement of science-based prevention programs and policies through empirical research." Its journal is entitled *Prevention Science*. The conference theme was "Effectiveness and Dissemination in Prevention Research." Presenting a paper that addressed the scientific base of a set of research findings that purported to demonstrate program effectiveness should have been OK, right? Wrong.

My 15-minute presentation was the first of four diverse papers addressing "Issues with the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program." During the course of the other presentations, the developer of the ATLAS program, Linn Goldberg, entered the room, having been summoned by one of his colleagues. He was the first to speak during the question-and-answer session at the end of the formal presentations. He began by saying that he had not been present for my presentation, but had been informed as to its content and had read my abstract in the conference program. He then asked whether I had informed the audience that the ATLAS program evaluations had demonstrated effects on behaviors such as the use of sports supplements and alcohol and drugs. I said that indeed I had, but that my main problem with the program was that it did not have any effects on its target behavior — in short, it was a steroid prevention program that did not prevent steroid use. Goldberg responded that steroids were a kind of hook that was used to promote the program and get schools interested in it. To this I countered that a school superintendent seeing a prevention program with the word "steroids" in the title might reasonably expect it to stop adolescents from using steroids.

Addressing the scientific base of a set of research findings should have been OK, right? Wrong.

From here, things began to deteriorate. Referring to my abstract in the conference program — which described the Department of Education exemplary criteria as "inadequate" — Goldberg asserted that it was, in fact, I who was inadequate to the task of assessing prevention programs. Other authoritative groups, he noted, had conferred similar honors on his ATLAS program. Who was I, he demanded — "from Bryan, Texas" — to question the wisdom of those experts who considered his program exemplary? I must admit that I found this rather amusing, as I had noticed (with some concern) earlier in the day that the program simply listed my affiliation as "School of Rural Public Health, Bryan, Texas" — with no mention at all of the Texas A&M University system.

At this point the session chair interceded, and asked if anyone else had a question or comment. In the course of the debate that followed, my use of science as the standard against which to judge evaluations of drug and violence programs was questioned. Specifically, concern was expressed that the

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methodological standards I applied to these programs were inappropriate to prevention research as this was a "new science." For example, it was suggested that use of one-tail significance tests was perfectly OK if the evaluator had no expectation that a program could have negative effects. Quite how one could know that an intervention would have no adverse effects without first having evaluated it was not made clear (and, indeed, school-based prevention programs have been shown to be iatrogenic in the past).

My parting shot to the audience involved a simple reminder of the place of critical discussion of research findings in science. I noted that in 10 years of attending prevention conferences that purported to be interested in research, evaluation, and science I had observed almost total resistance to such critical analysis. Indeed, the only program that I had ever heard discussed critically was the drug education program DARE; criticism of any other intervention was met with the type of defensive response that I had just experienced.

Why did my examination of data from evaluations of programs deemed by the Department of Education to be exemplary meet not with critical discussion of these data but with a hostility and defensiveness? Why did Christina Hoff Sommers's suggestion that we use scientific evidence to inform our decisions as to how to allocate a federal agency's funds meet with derision and censorship? Why is it that at a time when federal agencies such as CSAP, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, the Department of Education, and the Centers for Disease Control are advocating the use of so-called "science-based" prevention, the last thing anybody wants to do is engage in the type of critical discussion of evidence that is so fundamental to the practice of science? To answer these questions, one must understand what has become of science in the field of health promotion in recent years.

Science, anti-science, pseudoscience

In 1996, THE Johns Hopkins University Press published a book entitled *The Flight from Science and Reason* that brought together an impressive collection of papers from a New York Academy of Sciences-sponsored conference convened to discuss the effects that various forms of "anti-reason" have had on the academy over the past four decades. In one of the papers included in the volume, the philosopher of science Mario Bunge drew an interesting distinction between two types of activity that currently pervade academic circles — anti-science and pseudoscience. The former, he observes, developed in the United States out of the counter-culture of the 1960s, and is premised on a total denial of rational thought and empirical research — considering science to be merely an ideology that serves as a tool of male and/or racial and/or class domination. Variants of academic anti-science include existentialism and radical feminism.

In contrast, academic pseudoscience looks, at least superficially, like real

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science in that it formulates theories and hypotheses, measures and quantifies phenomena, and conducts statistical analyses. However, while it may display some of the "accoutrements of science," Bunge observes, it lacks its underlying substance. One type of pseudoscience is comprised of theories that apply these principles in an inappropriate manner — for example, developing meaningless and unquantifiable models of human behavior. Another type of pseudoscience is comprised of empirical studies that purport to be scientific but whose practitioners violate the most basic premises of scientific research. Specifically, there is no genuine attempt in this form of pseudoscience to subject hypotheses to empirical tests that can falsify them.

What Christina Hoff Sommers encountered at CSAP was, I contend, the anti-science movement in health promotion while, at the Society for Prevention Research, I encountered its pseudoscience counterpart.

Anti-science and health promotion

THE ANTI-SCIENCE movement in health promotion has arisen as part of the humanistic perspective within the discipline that positions itself in direct opposition to a science-based approach that it terms "positivism." According to this view, the application of the scientific method — that is, an approach to the world founded upon experimentation and hypothesis testing — to social phenomena is both epistemologically and ethically wrong. For example, writing in the journal *Health Education Research* in 1998, David Buchanan argued that the science-based approach views events from a cause-and-effect perspective which treats people as objects and thus contributes to alienation, powerlessness, and social disintegration. Therefore, the approach, he notes, is not only of little use in understanding human behavior, but is actually a central part of the ideology that serves to justify exploitation and suffering. Ethically, then, there is no place for a science-based approach to health promotion.

From an epistemological standpoint, the problem with the science-based approach to health promotion, according to its critics, is that it ignores the fundamental ontological distinction between natural processes and social processes. The former can be and have been successfully understood by the application of scientific methods and techniques. The latter cannot be and have not been elucidated through the application of science. Advocates of the humanistic approach such as Buchanan contend that the reason for this is that social phenomena derive from the aims, beliefs, expectations, choices, and intentions of individuals. These cannot be comprehended in terms of cause and effect. The best we can hope for is to describe social processes and actions, and in doing so we might better understand and make sense of aims, beliefs, expectations, choices, and intentions. However, while one can go some way toward "making sense" of social processes and actions one can never know what "causes" them to occur. Thus, in health promotion one

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cannot introduce a program or policy intended to produce a specific outcome, "control" for other factors that might influence that outcome, and assess the effects of one's intervention. That is, one cannot undertake scientific research.

Not surprisingly, these arguments for rejecting the scientific approach to studying social processes have not gone unchallenged. Bunge, for example, in his recent book *Social Science Under Debate* (University of Toronto Press, 1998), has demonstrated that it is very difficult to draw a line between the subject matter of the social and natural sciences. Many disciplines — linguistics and psychology, for example — draw heavily from both the social and natural sciences. Likewise, the content area of public health and health promotion — namely disease processes and behavioral problems — simply cannot be understood as either solely biological processes or solely social processes. Bunge also observes that while the behavior of any one individual may be difficult to predict or explain, group-level properties and patterns do exist (for example, in birth rates and voting) and can be predicted and explained. Thus, aims, beliefs, expectations, choices, and intentions are relatively homogeneous at a group-level, and therefore understanding individual idiosyncrasies is both unnecessary and pointless.

The move toward a postmodernist health promotion policy has potentially disastrous consequences.

Beyond these broad epistemological objections, I would argue that the movement toward a postmodernistic health promotion policy has potentially disastrous consequences in that it entails the abandonment of trying to rationally understand whether our attempts to improve health are effective and worth expending resources on. If the postmodern edict that explanation of real social events or processes is impossible to achieve is followed to its logical conclusion, then all anybody (including a researcher) can ultimately do is present his or her unique subjective understanding of that event or process.

An example, taken from the work of one of the main proponents of the postmodernist approach to evaluation, will serve to illustrate this. The "evaluation" of the Healthy Communities initiative described by Nina Wallerstein in *Social Science and Medicine* in 1999 took place over a period of four years in New Mexico. Wallerstein asserts that this is simply too short a period over which to expect any change in outcome variables related to the health status of the recipients of the intervention; hence, none are presented. (It is worth noting that many "positivistic" evaluations of interventions, such as the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development's Moving to Opportunities demonstration project, have shown success in assessing health-related outcomes over comparable periods of time.) Rather than assessing program outcomes, what Wallerstein chooses to do is describe

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her "learnings" (sic) concerning "the power relationships between myself as evaluator and the communities during the implementation of the evaluation."

It probably comes as no surprise that Wallerstein's tale is not a happy one. Two main villains loom large throughout. The first of these is the New Mexico state government agency that funded the intervention. The agency seems not to have shared Wallerstein's emancipatory ideology and by the second year of the project had the temerity to demand more accountability from the community groups in terms of the actual activities that were being undertaken. For Wallerstein this was not a case of the state government acting responsibly with tax dollars, but rather an expression of the "illegitimate abuses of power over others by the funding agency."

The other villain of the piece is scientific knowledge. Evaluators who succumb to this form of "power/discourse" are engaged in a misguided search for a nonexistent objective reality. Moreover, according to the tenets of postmodernist theory, one of the primary motives in doing so is the "pursuit of career advancement," which is engaged in "often at the expense of the community." True to her postmodernist creed, Wallerstein challenges the positivist social scientist's claim to objectivity and value-free science, claiming instead that science is just one of "a multiplicity of truths" and the researcher just one of many storytellers and interpreters of what happens in the world. Even worse, scientific data represent the "power/knowledge" discourse of positivist researchers, and this is frequently at odds with the "subjugated knowledge" of the community at whose expense they pursue their own interests.

Scientific data represent the "power/knowledge" discourse of positivist researchers.

The scientific knowledge power/discourse does in fact emerge from Wallerstein's learnings as a formidable enemy, capable of taking possession of an evaluator much like the monster in Ridley Scott's *Alien*. Indeed, Wallerstein herself succumbed to the insidious influence of science at one point in her project. Here's how it happened. At the start of the project, the graduate students conducting Wallerstein's interviews had a list of potential interviewees that had been given to them by the community coalitions. Over the course of the project she added others to the list without first clearing this with the coalition members. The decision to change the list in this way, Wallerstein claims, was justified "as a scientific decision (accepting the scientific knowledge/power discourse)." Nothing better demonstrates Wallerstein's limited understanding of what science actually is than this statement. Neither of the lists she used had anything whatsoever to do with science. Each has a very specific set of biases — the first those of the community leaders and the second those of the researchers. Now, Wallerstein could have brought some rigor to the task of interviewing community lead-

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ers — for example, by generating a comprehensive list of potential interviewees and randomly selecting subjects from it. This would have produced a more representative pool of potential interviewees, and almost certainly more useful data. And it is hard to think of a reason why introducing such rigor to the data collection process would in any way constitute subjugating, exploiting, or abusing anyone.

To their credit, some of the community group members appear to have been unimpressed by Wallerstein's efforts at emancipation and liberation. Not only did they take umbrage at her ad hoc interviewing strategy, they also objected to questions that she wanted to ask regarding the diversity of the coalitions (specifically those related to sexual orientation), and a number of the assertions made in the report she prepared were flatly rejected. One group, for example, questioned the validity of the information contained in quotations taken from her interviews regarding the underrepresentation of Hispanics. Wallerstein attributed this "resistance" to her initial failure to recognize her own position of privilege and power that derived from her status as an urban, Anglo university professor (her only "equalizing identity" being her gender). However, an equally plausible explanation of the community group's reaction is that its members realized that there was something fundamentally wrong with a researcher (whatever her race, gender, or place of residence) seemingly picking quotes out of interviews in an unstandardized manner. (Wallerstein does not report using any systematic procedure to extract information from the interviews; presumably this would have involved further succumbing to the scientific knowledge power/discourse.)

The key feature of the pseudo-scientific movement is that it superficially displays all of the trappings of real science.

It is worth noting in this regard that while denying the existence of objective knowledge elsewhere in her essay, Wallerstein describes her own report as containing "data" that were "hotly denied" by some community groups. Similar lapses into reality appear elsewhere. For example, on page 43 of the paper she states that postmodernist evaluators, rather than accepting epidemiologic data as "objective reality," would study them to reveal their "political context and local meaning." However, on the very next page she argues that children and families in New Mexico face some of the "worst health statistics in the nation," and proceeds to present epidemiologic data pertaining to prenatal care, drunk-driving fatalities, access to care, teen pregnancy, and poverty in order to substantiate this statement.

Will the experiences of the people of New Mexico and particularly their health be in any way affected for the better by Wallerstein's postmodernist empowerment evaluation? We will of course never know, since assessing

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such outcomes is of absolutely no interest or concern to the postmodern researcher.

Pseudoscience and health promotion

THE KEY FEATURE of the pseudoscientific movement within health promotion is that it superficially displays all of the trappings of real science — random assignment of subjects to study conditions, collection of quantifiable data, and use of statistical analysis — but makes no attempt at serious hypothesis testing. These tendencies are most prevalent in school-based efforts intended to ameliorate a range of undesirable behaviors among adolescents such as drug use, violence, and having sex. I have written at length about the prevalence of pseudoscience in the evaluation of these programs over the past seven years. Here I will confine myself to one example — the Seattle Social Development Project (SSDP). Like Linn Goldberg's ATLAS program, the SSDP has been the recipient of numerous "best of" awards in recent years. It is a Department of Education "promising program," both a CSAP and a Department of Health and Human Services "model program," and is listed in the National Institute on Drug Abuse's *Research-Based Guide* of 1997.

The SSDP was developed by David Hawkins and Richard Catalano of the University of Washington in Seattle, and is based on a conceptual model that stresses the importance of children developing strong bonds to the principal institutions of socialization within society, namely the family and school. Its program combines parent education, training teachers in classroom management practices, and skills training for students. The bonding hypothesis is reasonable, and the program an acceptable means whereby this bonding might be achieved. But what do the data show?

The outcomes reported in the evaluations of the SSDP have broadened out over the years. Initial reports from the project focused on its effects on delinquent behavior and aggression. Later accounts focused on its effects on alcohol use, while a paper authored by Hawkins and colleagues in the *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine* in 1999 reported effects on three sets of outcomes at age 18 years — violent and non-violent criminal behavior, alcohol and drug (substance) use, and sexual activity. Specifically, there were four variables assessed for each of the three outcome behaviors used in the study. These pertained to "lifetime" prevalence of the behavior — for example, whether the subjects had ever committed a violent crime, ever been arrested, ever used alcohol, ever used marijuana, ever had or fathered a baby, or had multiple sexual partners. In addition, "heavy use" of alcohol, cigarettes, and marijuana and prevalence of drunk driving over the previous year were reported.

The results of the study show that there were no statistically significant differences between the intervention and control groups on any of the life-

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time substance use measures. There was one statistically significant difference on the four lifetime crime measures, and two such differences on the lifetime sexual activity measures. Of the four previous-year measures, the only statistically significant difference found was for heavy alcohol use. In total, then, just four of the sixteen measures used in the study showed a statistically significant difference between participants in the SSDP and control subjects. Moreover, these effects were all limited to those that received a full dose of the program (that is, those who participated from first grade onward). Those who began the program in fifth grade did not differ from the control group on any of the outcome variables. Also, only about half of the full intervention subjects that started the program in first grade were followed up at 18 years—a very high rate of attrition.

All in all, this would seem to be sufficient evidence to falsify the hypothesis that the program has an effect on a range of behaviors — or so one would think. Not according to Hawkins and colleagues, who assert that the intervention had "enduring effects in reducing violent behavior, heavy drinking, and sexual intercourse by age 18 years." Now while the developers of the SSDP might be excused for still thinking favorably of their creation despite this set of findings, it was on the basis of this evidence that the program was conferred "best of" status by federal agencies such as the Department of Health and Human Services, the National Institute on Drug Abuse, and CSAP.

Critical thinking vs. political thinking

NOT ALL HEALTH promotion evaluations exhibit the weaknesses discussed herein. For example, Harold Holder and his colleagues at the Prevention Research Center in Berkeley recently conducted a methodologically rigorous community trial of an intervention designed to reduce alcohol-related injury. The published accounts from this study in such journals as the *Evaluation Review* and *Journal of the American Medical Association* describe in detail the efforts that were put into isolating the effects of the intervention from other influences on alcohol-related injuries, measuring implementation of the various program components, and assessing its effects on important outcome variables such as motor vehicle crashes and assaults. It is worth noting that Holder and colleagues employed community mobilization as a strategy in their intervention, but were able to quantify its implementation without seemingly exploiting or subjugating the communities in their study.

In the area of school health, the recently completed Hutchinson Smoking Prevention Project of Arthur Petersen and associates was also methodologically sophisticated and the authors were willing to report in their 2000 paper in the *Journal of the National Cancer Institute* that the program had no effect on smoking. It is also worth noting that both the Holder and

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Petersen evaluations were funded by the federal government, as was the methodologically ambitious Moving to Opportunities demonstration project mentioned earlier. Thus, the news is not all bad.

It remains true, however, that most evaluations in this area have come to resemble exercises in what the philosopher Mark Notturno called, in his book *Science and the Open Society* (Central European University Press, 2000), "political thinking" — that is, thinking motivated by the need to be accepted by and to defer to apparent authorities. In the case of the anti-science evident in community-based health promotion, the authorities are those that have declared a new postmodernist era in program evaluation. The heretics are those who hang on to their old positivist ways — individuals who at best are misguided or at worse agents of oppression and exploitation. Vanquishing these positivists is what passes for political activism among postmodernist academics. Hence, silencing those who suggest that research evidence be used to determine whether ideologically driven programs such as "Boy Talk" and "Girl Power!" are funded is perfectly acceptable.

In the case of the pseudoscience that dominates school-based prevention, the authorities are the expert panels that are convened by government and private agencies to determine what is "best practice" or "research-based" or "exemplary." If an independent researcher examines the evidence pertaining to any of the approved programs and contests a panel's judgment, this leads not to a critical analysis and discussion of the relevant data but to questions as to the adequacy of the individual who raised the questions. What both of these forms of political thinking demand is deference to authority and solidarity, not a search for the truth about efforts to promote health.

It is interesting to note in this respect that both the proponents of postmodernist evaluation and the proponents of "research-based" health promotion invoke the idea of a paradigm shift in describing their activities. As noted above, the former explicitly present their approach to theory, research, and practice as a radical break with what they call "positivism." For their part, the advocates of the "research-based" approach present this as a fundamental break with previous approaches such as information dissemination, fear arousal, moral appeals, and alternatives. This is significant, for, as Notturno observes, what is most debilitating about paradigms is that they require the uncritical commitment of followers: Allegiance to the community of fellow adherents and solidarity of belief are what matter, not rational and free thought. Thus, censoring critics and ostracizing those who have yet to convert are not aberrations; they are precisely the functions that the paradigm-based community is intended to serve.

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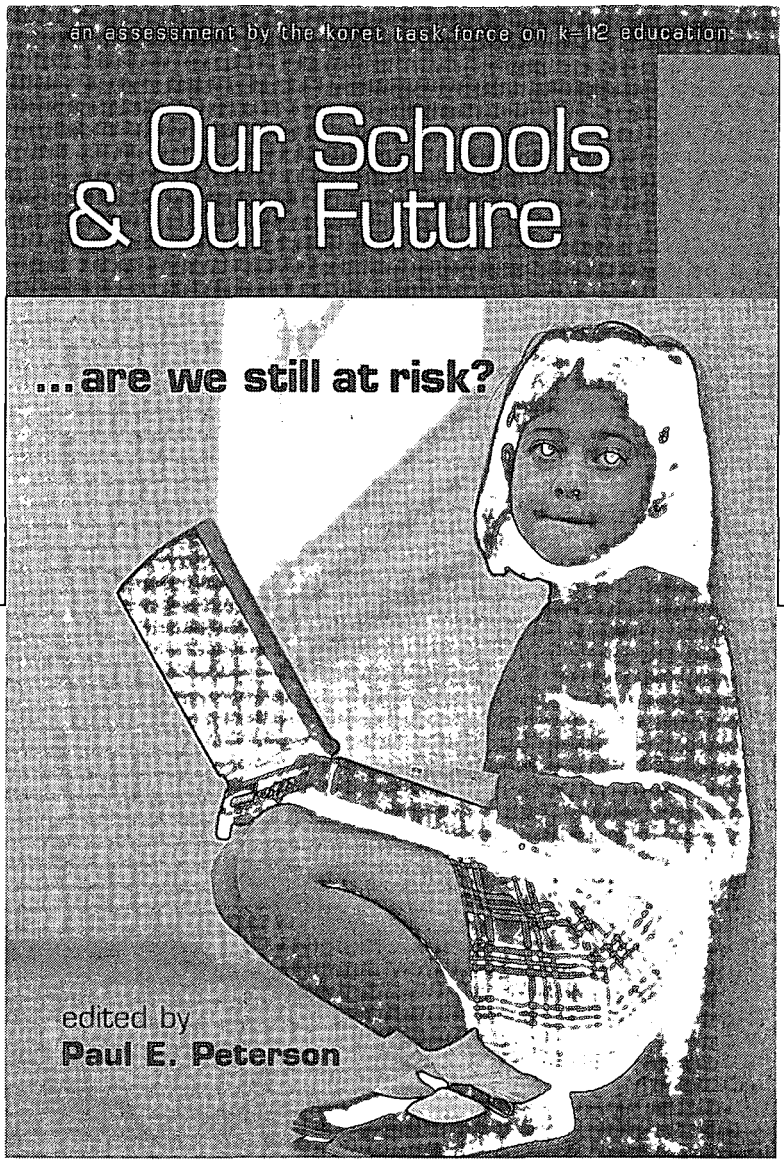
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BOOKS

Humans, Animals, And the Human Animal

By STEVEN MENASHI

MATTHEW SCULLY. *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy.* ST. MARTIN'S PRESS. 464 PAGES. $27.95

TYPICALLY, animal rights activists are hard to take seriously. Shortly after the September 2001 terrorist attacks, for example, one Karen Davis, president of an outfit called United Poultry Concerns, took to the pages of *Vegan Voice* to opine, "I think it is speciesist to think that the September 11 attack on the World Trade Center was a greater tragedy than what millions of chickens endured that day and what they endure every day because they cannot defend themselves against the concerted human appetites arrayed against them." Indeed, "For 35 million chickens in the United States alone, every single night is a terrorist attack." Lurking behind such comments one perceives a perverse hostility to human dignity, and the attitude expressed is so inhuman that the only appropriate response is contempt.

So it is understandable that sensible people often take some satisfaction in expressions of callousness toward animals. "Calves are adorable," writes *Slate* columnist David Plotz. "But veal is delicious." Food critic Digby Anderson, writing in the *Daily Telegraph*, maintains, "In a civilized society rabbits are shot (or snared or ferreted) and eaten. They are not shot grudgingly, as vermin, and eaten grudgingly, to use up what had to be shot. They are to be eaten enthusiastically with mustard sauce." Given the animal lobby's own unconscionableness ("Six million Jews died in concentration camps," PETA founder Ingrid Newkirk once told the *Washington Post*, "but six billion broiler chickens will die this year in slaughterhouses"), these seem like measured ripostes, and many otherwise animal-loving people relish the angst that such comments doubtless produce among the zoolatrous.

And who, really, can blame them? The animal rights crowd is, by and large, a contemptible bunch — people who belittle human life not only in their rhetoric, but also increasingly through arson and physical attacks. (The FBI counts the Earth Liberation Front among the nation's largest terrorist groups.) And then there's animal liberation scholar Peter Singer, the Ira W. DeCamp professor of bioethics in the University Center for Human Values at

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Princeton University, who — though he is really a more serious thinker than his critics are willing to admit — is still one who champions such practices as infanticide and bestiality.

Into this mix steps Mathew Scully, a former speechwriter for George W. Bush and *National Review* editor, with *Dominion: The Power of Man, the Suffering of Animals, and the Call to Mercy*. To a general audience, Scully appears as out of place among the PETA crowd as Nixon did in China — and it seems he has opened some doors as well. The *Weekly Standard*'s Fred Barnes gave *Dominion*, and its cause, a glowing review in the *Wall Street Journal*. And *Dominion* appeared on the cover of the *American Conservative*, and in *National Review*, and in the *Weekly Standard*, and received praise from the likes of G. Gordon Liddy and Joseph Sobran. Suddenly, animal rights is an important topic among conservatives, which was Scully's intent. His primary audience is conservatives, and especially religious conservatives: "More than anything else, I hope with this book to speak to those people."

In *Dominion*, Scully introduces us to folks just as objectionable as the animal activists. He visits Safari Club International, where he finds people who hunt sheep by helicopter, or practice "canned hunting" (shooting exotic wildlife while they're trapped and helpless), or watch videos like *Double-Barreled Zambezi Adventure* ("You're right there to see four dramatic brain shots!"). Most shocking is Scully's look at a modern factory farm, where pigs are kept immobile in tiny cages, never to step outdoors, and subjected to treatment so brutal even to watch that all 5,000 farm employees quit — and need to be replaced — every year.

What distinguishes *Dominion*, however, is Scully's determination to distance himself from the more intemperate animal liberation advocates, who deny any essential difference between people and animals and insist on the legal enforcement of animal rights. Scully isn't interested, he says, in elaborating a formal doctrine of animal rights, finding that "the rights cause with its more extravagant claims has become a convenient foil, a pretext for disregarding the subject of animal welfare altogether." Nor does he deny the singular dignity of the human being. Rather, Scully wants to make the case for animals based on an older, and more readily agreeable, concept — mercy. As he writes in the book's introduction, "Animals are more than ever a test of our character, of mankind's capacity for empathy and for decent, honorable conduct and faithful stewardship. We are called to treat them with kindness, not because they have rights or power or some claim to equality, but in a sense because they don't; because they all stand unequal and powerless before us."

The vision is appealing, and probably captures the mainstream thinking about animal welfare. We are often horrified not by an actual wrong done to animals — after all, animals harm each other all the time, and we don't find that behavior problematic — but by the sort of person who would intentionally torture an innocent sentient being. When we act out of what Scully calls "a spirit of kindness and clemency" toward our fellow creatures, we exhibit the best elements of human character. "There are moments," says

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Scully, "when life demands some basic response of fellow-feeling and mercy and love." When we make jokes about veal calves or otherwise display indifference to suffering, it turns out that we've lost touch with some salutary impulse in our nature. Laws prohibiting cruelty to animals, by this logic, would rank with laws against other practices — dueling, for example — that don't really involve a victim but are too gruesome to occur in a decent society.

Scully has received much praise for rescuing the cause of animal welfare from the extremism of the animal rights movement and for sounding a call to mercy rather than to litigation. The problem, however, is that he doesn't actually do that. In the end, Scully comes around to the animal rights position. "If a man beats, neglects, starves, or abandons a dog, and the dog belongs to him, there are no grounds to punish that man except by recognizing some independent moral claim of the dog," he argues. Scully claims that by enacting laws against animal cruelty, we have already conceded that animals have rights, and the only question left is how far those rights extend. "Once it is granted that humans can act wrongfully in our power over animals," Scully asks rhetorically, "what grounds are left for denying that animals have a right not to be treated wrongfully at our hands?"

This is simply mistaken. We also have laws against damaging historical buildings and landmarks, or forests and streams, even when they are privately owned, but that doesn't mean we invest houses and trees with any legal rights.

Throughout *Dominion*, Scully oscillates between an appeal to mercy and forbearance for the animals and an invocation of animal rights. (Ultimately, in his recommendations for public policy and legal reform, he sides with the animal rights approach: people "can worry about their own souls.") There is a similar tension when Scully berates Peter Singer for his "attack on the sanctity of human life"

Scully has received much praise for rescuing the cause of animal welfare from the extremism of animal rights and for sounding a call to mercy rather than to litigation. The problem is that he doesn't actually do that.

and then also criticizes science writer Stephen Budiansky for working "to kill any sense of kinship we feel even with primates." Surveying scientific and anecdotal data regarding animal intelligence, Scully concludes that we share "thought and feeling" with nonhuman animals, having an advantage only in our possession of verbal language and more highly developed "abstract concepts." The difference between humans and animals, then, appears to be one of degree rather than kind. Compared to human consciousness, animal consciousness is "a humbler version of the

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same thing," as Scully puts it — which is precisely Singer's position.

IT TURNS OUT that there are really two Matthew Scullys in *Dominion*, with two divergent attitudes toward animals. On the one hand, there is the humanist Scully, who acknowledges human superiority but encourages mercy for inferior creation. In this account, humans are marked by a "spiritual grandeur" that animals lack, a vision that accommodates the Christian view that humans, created in the image of God, possess a special dignity. Humans stand above and apart from the animal world, which "we enter as lords of the earth bearing strange powers of terror and mercy alike." In short, humans are God to the animals. Scully makes this analogy explicit in commenting on a British law to ban fur:

> I find the language of the bill very touching, the full majesty of the law here reaching down even to those afflicted creatures huddled in their cages, just as the merciful judgment that every human being will need must come in a way and from a place as far from our understanding as the halls of Westminster are to them.

Such a relationship leaves no room for animal rights, it would seem. "Only before one another do we ourselves even have a right to life," Scully admits. "Before our Maker we are rightless, our very existence an act of divine generosity." If humans really are as gods to the animals, claims on behalf of animals can't constrain people in the way Scully intends. The animals' fates would rest with human generosity — which is not, it turns out, reliable enough.

On the other hand, there is a second, naturalist Scully, for whom animals are our "fellow creatures," sharing thought and emotion as well as instinct and appetite:

> It is easy to look down upon the animals as utterly alien to us, driven on by need and instinct in their grubbier, less rational way, slavering for food and attention like our pets, jostling at the trough on our farms, battling one another in the wild over mates and territory and status in the group. But the person who thinks himself entirely above and apart from this world need only take a closer look at his or her own daily existence, at the struggles and hurts and yearnings of body that still mark each and every human life. We do our share of grubbing and jostling and competing for mates, too, and for good reason do we say of people hurt or humiliated that they are "licking their wounds." There is a kinship in this, for all our loftier capacities, a fellowship with the creatures.

For Scully the naturalist, man stands within rather than outside nature, and humans and animals are subject to the same God.

Scully invokes each vision according to the needs of his argument, deploying the humanist conception when he wants to urge us to rise above the law of the jungle (by, say, abstaining from meat in favor of soybeans) and the naturalist account when he wants to deflate human arrogance.

Our most arrogant presumptions center on the concept of Dominion, the

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authority God gives man over the animals in Genesis, which Scully finds invoked time and again by rather unsavory people to justify rather unsavory practices. Today, Dominion is taken to be justification for the humanist view, for our godlike powers over the animals. But that's not at all what the Bible says. After all, at the same moment God gives man Dominion over the creatures, He also instructs man to eat plants rather than animals (Gen. 1:29).

And there's more: Animals, along with man, are given the Sabbath as a day of rest (Ex. 23:12, 20:10). God establishes a covenant not only with man, but with "every living creature of all flesh" (Gen. 9:15). And the Bible includes a host of animal cruelty statutes — only a few of which Scully mentions — that require humane conduct, such as the prohibition on muzzling an ox while it threshes (Deut. 25:4). It's not until after the Flood that man is permitted to eat meat, and even then the practice is surrounded by regulations that provide for humane treatment and the least painful slaughter practicable.

It turns out that the Old Testament, despite its granting of Dominion, takes a rather grim view of hunting. The only people who are identified as hunters — Nimrod and Esau — are depicted as evil. And Scully observes that it is Moses's kindness toward a lamb that qualifies him as a leader: "You who have compassion for a lamb shall now be the shepherd of My people Israel." The New Testament's recurrent metaphor of Jesus as the Good Shepherd also points toward the biblical vision of leadership. The role of the shepherd seems to be what the God of Genesis has in mind for humankind when He gives us Dominion: We are to be caretakers and stewards, not ruthless pillagers of nature.

Such a conception does not evade the explicit language of Genesis, but merely recognizes that our understanding of Dominion in the Bible has been clouded by more modern ideas. And this is not an understanding of Dominion that is alien to our experience. Indeed, as others have noted, the queen of England is said to have "dominion" over her subjects, but she neither eats them nor hunts them down in game parks.

Scully, a Christian, expresses some dismay that the New Testament doesn't have much to say about our duties to animals. "I have often wished [Jesus] had been more explicit on this score," he writes, "somewhere along the way encountering a four-footed equivalent of the woman about to be stoned, fleeing its persecutors, finding refuge beside him, prompting some saying for the ages about laying hands off the innocent creature and dealing mercifully with them all." One notes, however, that Scully has left out some inconvenient verses in scripture, such as Peter's vision in Acts, when he is shown a procession of animals and hears a heavenly voice exclaim, "Get up, Peter; kill and eat." It's not exactly the saying for the ages that Scully hoped for.

Nevertheless, Scully appeals to a solid Christian tradition of mercy toward animals, which includes Saint Francis of Assisi and C.S. Lewis, among others. And it is true that if you take seriously the symbolism of the lamb as the *Agnus Dei*, you must endure a tremendous amount of cognitive dissonance in order to tolerate the

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treatment of lambs under modern factory farming techniques.

In a review of *Dominion* in the *Atlantic Monthly*, Christopher Hitchens charges that the justifications for commercial hunting and factory farming Scully hears are "the disconcerting sounds of his own politics being played back to him." But Scully does not agree. "I find nothing in the conservative moral tradition remotely resembling this sacrifice of every creature in sight before the almighty dollar. It is a different spirit entirely," he writes. "It isn't rooted in conservatism, or Christianity, or Judaism, or classic capitalism, or any other tradition of honorable origin. It is much closer to what, in conservative big-think circles, they call 'the modern spirit.' "

The animal rights agenda has lately been associated with left-wing politics, and some conservatives will be inclined to dismiss Scully's talk about a sense of kinship with the animals as the sentimental mush of political correctness. Interestingly, however, the kinship Scully commends leads him naturally to a conservative view of politics: Scully's ultimate appeal is to the tradition of "natural law." "Every being has a nature, and that nature defines the ends and ultimate good for which it exists," he writes. "Suddenly all is not arbitrary and we have a fixed point of reference, an intelligent basis for calling one thing good and another bad."

It's the modern left that believes people stand outside and above nature, peering down on the rest of creation with a godlike power to manipulate it for our own purposes. Feminists and gender theorists argue that institutions like marriage and the family — and, indeed, gender itself — are "social constructs" that can be uprooted and rearranged through education and social engineering. Karl Marx advanced a materialist theory of history that ruled out a fixed human nature; "the human essence is no abstraction inherent in each single individual," he wrote, "it is the ensemble of the social relations." And Marx's descendants have gone about the project of manipulating human nature according to some rational plan for social harmony.

Throughout these adventures, conservatives have counterpoised a belief in the permanent truths of human nature to the liberal faith in the perfectibility of man. Traditionally, this critique was made out of a religious understanding of man's fallen nature or a philosophic insight into human character. Increasingly, however, conservatives are appealing to modern science. In her *The War Against Boys: How Misguided Feminism Is Harming Our Young Men* (Simon & Schuster, 2000), Christina Hoff Sommers appealed to advances in evolutionary biology, neuroscience, and endocrinology to establish, against the gender theorists, that gender really is hardwired into our biological selves. James Q. Wilson has identified a "natural moral sense" that leads, among other things, to marriage being a universal characteristic of all human societies.

Francis Fukuyama explains the failure of Marxism by reference to a universal human nature: "Marx argued that man is a species-being, that is, that human beings have altruistic feelings toward the human species as a whole. The policies and institutions of real-world communist states — like the

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abolition of private property, the subordination of the family to the party-state, and commitment to universal worker solidarity — were all predicated on this belief." As we learn from modern kin selection theory, however, Marx's premise is simply untrue; altruism emerges from the need of *individuals* to pass on their genes. And as we know even from common experience, any political system that denies such moral inclinations as parental care or familial bonding stands against human nature. Perhaps such a view explains the relative lack of success of socialist dictatorships compared to liberal democracy — and economist Paul Rubin, in his *Darwinian Politics: The Evolutionary Origin of Freedom* (Rutgers University Press, 2002), makes just that claim.

But the idea of human malleability is nowhere more vividly refuted than in the descriptions of kinship between man and animal contained in *Dominion*. Animals form hierarchical social relationships and observe norms of reciprocity and taboos against incest. Some, like wolves and quail, form pair bonds (like marriages) that last a lifetime. And animals, like humans, form special bonds with their kin that involve special obligations of care. Scully observes that elephant hunters cannot kill just one member of a herd; "you have to kill them all," as one hunter put it. This is because of family relationships within the herd. Orphaned elephant calves, for example, become violent, asocial juveniles. It doesn't take a great mental leap for humans to identify with these creatures.

The study of animals, in fact, has had important implications for understanding human nature. It sounds silly today, but a half-century ago psychologists discouraged affection between parents and children; overt displays of love, they argued, could damage a child's character, making him self-centered and needy. As journalist Deborah Blum records in her recent *Love at Goon Park: Harry Harlow and the Science of Affection* (Perseus, 2002), it was studies of neglected primates that led to the recognition of what is today conventional wisdom: Early love and affection improve the child's future health, social relationships, and even intelligence. Those who insist on an unbridgeable gap between humanity and nature actually miss something important about ourselves. "If any person thinks the examination of the rest of the animal kingdom an unworthy task," Aristotle wrote, "he must hold in disesteem the study of man."

Aristotle, of course, didn't regard humans and animals as moral or intellectual equals. For him, humans were political animals, capable of speech and social activity that nonhuman animals cannot approach. But he recognized a kinship with them, even if humans are ultimately a different sort of animal destined for a higher purpose. It is a more recent thinker, René Descartes, whom Scully charges with callous indifference to the animals. Descartes regarded animals as unthinking machines and their cries of pain when suffering as nothing more than the sounds of "broken machinery." Man alone was capable of consciousness, thought, and self-creation.

Scully wonders why people find it so threatening to human dignity to regard animals as our fellow creatures, with a dignity (albeit a lesser one) of their own. But this is not such a mystery.

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Descartes's project was for people, through science, to "render ourselves the masters and possessors of nature." To acknowledge our ties to animals would be to recognize some power that constrains human endeavor: nature, or nature's God. That's a distinctly conservative vision, of course. To be sure, it's not the only conservative vision (libertarians, for example, have little use for human nature). But Scully is mostly right when he chastises conservatives who instinctively write off animal welfare — they are guilty of the same inconsistent attitudes toward nature that Scully himself reveals in *Dominion*.

YET HERE, too, is a cautionary note for the left. Those Marxists who advocate animal liberation, after all, exhibit the same inconsistencies. You can't argue that there is no moral difference between humans and animals and then claim that humans possess a unique capacity to escape and change their nature — that is quite a moral difference.

Peter Singer, who has combined liberal politics with animal advocacy, concedes that his "is a sharply deflated vision of the Left, its utopian ideas replaced by a coolly realistic view of what can be achieved." In his *A Darwinian Left* (Yale University Press, 1999), Singer argues that the left needs to accept that some facts about human society — gender differences, social hierarchy, attachment to kin — are rooted in human nature and cannot be altered through the right social policies. (Strangely, he abandons this principle when, say, he advocates putting aside our natural parental affection in the case of infanticide.) Singer writes that the left needs to give up on the possibility of ending conflict between human beings and must concede that not all inequalities are the result of discrimination or social conditioning. A deflated left indeed.

Ultimately, our kinship with animals presents a serious challenge to egalitarianism. Once it is conceded that there is a hierarchy of rights or of moral worth in the animal kingdom — a schema of higher and lesser beings in accordance with their natural capacities — equality within the human species appears at risk. Egalitarians who advocate animal rights (save the most radical "pig is a dog is a man is a boy" types) need to think through the implications of establishing a biological hierarchy as the basis of our legal rights.

Fukuyama, who identifies nature as the basis of political rights in his *Our Posthuman Future* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 2002), tries to square the circle by imbuing each human individual with a mysterious "Factor x" that is the source of his unique dignity compared to the rest of the animal kingdom. Fukuyama acknowledges that animals have rights, based on their more limited capacities, but cautions against excessive precision in establishing a rights hierarchy. Fukuyama urges us to focus on "species-typical" behavior, and, barring the appearance of the Missing Link, this seems both sensible and practicable — especially as the advance of science and technology continues to imperil the idea of human equality.

Of course, the best and most distinctive behavior we exhibit is the political deliberation that led us to egalitarianism in the first place. Liberal democra-

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cy doesn't just work; people actually believe in it. In a relatively short period — insignificant in evolutionary time — humanity has traded in despotism for a world in which global politics is conducted in the language of human rights and equality. We may exhibit instinctual behavior in our communities and families, but when we sit down to make our laws no one seriously proposes feudalism or aristocracy. These ideas have been discredited. We consider ourselves equal and want to treat others equally. Humans are capable of a reflection that distinguishes us from the animals, whether it's a difference in kind or of a very large degree. When we extend our political concern to animals, we act out of our most honorable instincts and even form a healthier society. But animals don't demand such treatment, and wouldn't give it to us if they could.

On the Fringe

By Eli Lehrer

Carol Swain. *The New White Nationalism in America: Its Challenge to Integration.* Cambridge University Press. 416 pages. $30.00

One July afternoon in 1999, a University of Illinois student named Benjamin Smith picked up a 9-mm handgun he had purchased through a classified advertisement, climbed into his car, and murdered Ricky Byrdsong as the popular Northwestern University basketball coach walked near his home in Skokie, Illinois. The following day, Smith killed two other African-Americans and an Asian in a homicide spree that cut a bloody diagonal line across Illinois. The next day, July 4, he shot an Indiana University graduate student before turning the gun on himself. Smith, a member of a white supremacist "religion" called the World Church of the Creator, had grown up in an affluent Chicago suburb and dated a Korean girl during high school. Recruited into the "church" on the University of Illinois's Urbana-Champaign campus, he became a virulent racist and anti-Semite. After the Illinois State Bar denied a law license to World Church leader Matthew Hale, Smith launched his killing spree with the hope of sparking the racial holy war "creators" fervently hope for. (On January 8 of this year, U.S. Marshals arrested Hale himself for allegedly plotting to kill a judge who had ruled against his organization in a trademark case.)

While the book stops short of prophesying a race war, Carol Swain's *The New White Nationalism in America* argues that white nationalist groups like Smith's have "the potential to expand [their] ranks among ordinary white Americans, who increasingly find themselves frustrated by a host of unresolved public policy issues in the area of ethnicity and race." Swain, a law professor at Vanderbilt University, contends that such frustration stems from a variety of legitimate grievances —

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from the volume of black-on-white crime to racial preferences and multicultural ideologies that exalt group rights. White nationalism, like many of the multiculturalist philosophies promoted by the left, posits that whites have distinct group interests that run counter to those of blacks, Latinos, Asians, and, often, Jews. For the white nationalist, the United States is a "white nation" that is now being hijacked. The "new" white nationalist groups Swain describes theoretically eschew violence, although many of their adherents have acted violently at times. Swain takes these groups seriously and admits that they sometimes have a point.

Swain has long dealt with controversy. A onetime welfare recipient who grew up in rural Virginia, she left school in the ninth grade and gave birth to her first child at 16. Dissatisfied with life in the small African-American community where she grew up, she entered community college and eventually earned a doctorate from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. She won tenure at Princeton (moving to Vanderbilt later on) and began her academic career with a study of congressional representation, *Black Faces, Black Interests* (Harvard University Press, 1993), which made a convincing case against one-race congressional districts. During the multi-year sabbatical she used to write *The New White Nationalism,* Swain became a born-again Christian and earned a master's degree in law from Yale. It's almost impossible to place her in any ideological camp: The back of her most recent book includes endorsements from both conservative Princeton scholar Robert P. George and Harvard social democrat William Julius Wilson.

While the conclusions of her first book have become conventional wisdom — even the NAACP no longer insists on strict racial gerrymanders — her latest work promises to prove far more controversial. *The New White Nationalism* consists of four major sections: a discussion of the growing influence of white nationalism, an examination of public attitudes toward affirmative action, an exploration of young people's opinions about race, and a discussion of policy prescriptions intended to combat the white nationalist threat. In each chapter Swain offers a wealth of scholarship and ideas. Put together, however, *The New White Nationalism* proves incomplete. While she sheds new light on many sources of racial tension in America and offers many valuable suggestions, Swain does not make a convincing case that white nationalism will reemerge as a major political force.

Swain's research on white nationalism consists of a series of interviews with white nationalist leaders — conducted by Princeton University's Russell Nieli and collected in a March 2003 book, *Contemporary Voices of White Nationalism in America* (Cambridge University Press) — and a bevy of original survey data about affirmative action in employment and higher education.

Swain's interviews simply don't provide compelling evidence that white nationalist leaders have the potential to recruit a larger following. In all, she interviews 10 individuals and doesn't appear to have done field research at

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white nationalist gatherings. (As an African-American, admittedly, this might have proven difficult but her assistant Nieli, who is white, didn't seem to have any problem getting racists to talk.) Two of the individuals she considers, furthermore, are Jews and thus have almost no chance of gaining traction in a movement that is predominantly anti-Semitic. Nonetheless, the interviews provide some fascinating insight into the mindset of the white nationalist fringe.

The white nationalist movement leaders seem a pathetic lot. Of the 10 Swain selected as a representative cross sample of the new white nationalist movement, only four appear to have any following outside the internet. Even those with actual followings run organizations that consist of little more than amateurish websites and email lists. Only one group Swain examines — Jared Taylor's *American Renaissance* magazine — appears to have a headquarters anywhere other than the home of its leader. (Hale, the self-styled *Pontifex Maximus* of the World Church of the Creator, for example, lives in his parents' East Peoria, Illinois basement.)

Far from making mainstream inroads, there is significant evidence that white nationalist groups have moved to the margins of society. The World Church of the Creator, the only group from which Swain interviews more than one leader, proves a particularly good example. Until it revised its webpage in the middle of the summer of 2002, the World Church listed prisons as the addresses for a great many of its regional leaders. Standard textbooks for training gang officers list the World Church alongside the Crips, Latin Kings, and Black Gangster Disciples. The World Church members I've met during my field research on policing seem far more concerned with consuming methamphetamine and stealing cars than with starting a racial holy war. In mid-August 2002 the lead item on the church's website called for freeing a "reverend" who had recently been re-imprisoned for parole violations. Although the claim seems dubious, Swain takes Hale at his word when he says that the World Church seeks bright college students and doesn't "welcome people who are prone to criminal activity."

Support for white nationalism has vanished from mainstream politics. Conservative political magazines like *Chronicles* and *National Review* that once printed articles with a degree of sympathy for white nationalism now argue for colorblindness. Patrick Buchanan, who demonstrated some affection for white nationalists as recently as the early 1990s, chose a black woman as his running mate during his most recent bid for the presidency. Even the Southern Party, a fringe group that supports peaceful secession of the 13 "confederate" states, bars white nationalists from membership. White nationalism, in other words, has become marginal.

Likewise, the polling data and focus groups Swain employs to investigate affirmative action policy show plenty of evidence of frustration but little that white Americans have begun to think in terms of group interests. In her study of affirmative action in university admissions, for example, Swain finds that blacks and whites alike favor class-based preferences over race-based ones. Both groups, moreover, tend to believe

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that universities admit affluent white students with excellent grades over working-class African-Americans with above-average grades. African-Americans, it is true, were more likely than their white counterparts to believe that universities wouldn't give smart working-class black kids the benefit of the doubt, but even this hardly seems like proof of a gaping racial chasm.

Swain harps on certain minor fault lines, but the bulk of her data show that whites and blacks alike have grown uncomfortable with affirmative action. Even on this issue, blacks and whites agree as much as they disagree.

In employment situations, Swain also finds little indication of frustration deep enough to evoke white nationalism. Indeed, in certain employment situations, Swain discovers that whites are "slightly *more* willing to compromise the performance principle when a black is benefited over a white than when a white is benefited over a black." This is an exceptional polling result because it shows support for racial preferences, but it's no evidence of growing white racial solidarity. While Swain harps on certain minor fault lines, the bulk of her data show that whites and blacks alike have grown uncomfortable with affirmative action, though most blacks seek to retain some of it as a preventative against real and perceived discrimination. Even when it comes to this notoriously touchy issue, blacks and whites agree as much as they disagree.

Swain's strongest arguments deal with issues that have largely vanished from mainstream discourse but still receive attention on the white nationalist fringe. While she predictably condemns police brutality, she's also refreshingly honest about the alarming crime rates in African-American neighborhoods and the high levels of black-on-white crime. She's equally incisive in discussing the ways overbearing multiculturalism could lead to sympathy for white nationalist groups and how segregated ethnic living centers on college campuses tend to inflame racial tensions.

Swain comes down hard on the slavery reparations movement and even shows sympathy for conservative firebrand David Horowitz's campaign to expose it as a shakedown effort. Her discussion of immigration and its effects on labor markets for unskilled workers seems incomplete and rushed, but it is difficult to argue with the limited data she presents. Issues like these, Swain is right to point out, represent an opening for white nationalists seeking mainstream supporters. But she overstates her case when she implies that they are the only ones who discuss them: It's notable that Horowitz — an ardent supporter of colorblind policies who makes special efforts to surround himself with African-Americans — has emerged as the primary antagonist of the slavery reparations crowd. White

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nationalism simply isn't selling outside the margins of society.

In an effort to soothe racial tensions, Swain offers a wealth of policy proposals. Most prominently, she makes a very convincing case for replacing affirmative action with enhanced enforcement of anti-discrimination laws. While some of her proposals — such as cash rewards for reporting discrimination — do seem a bit extreme, anonymous tests to ensure that employers, colleges, and real estate agents don't discriminate deserve serious consideration. Swain will please conservatives with proposals to restore free speech on campuses, pay attention to crime rates in the African-American community, and uphold the two-parent heterosexual family as the social ideal. Swain also picks up a few appealing social welfare proposals from the left: She wants to replace the earned income tax credit with monthly wage subsidies (a low-cost proposal which would vastly improve life for the working poor), enhance vocational education for the non-college-bound, and invest in public transportation and car subsidies to make it easier for the poor to get to work.

A few of her proposals — doing less to collect child support from low-income males and limiting legal immigration — aren't quite as well developed but still make a good-faith effort to confront important issues. By the time she gets to her proposals, however, she's strayed far from her nominal task of preventing white nationalists from gaining ground. Most of her policy proposals make sense on their own merits but would probably do little to satisfy hardened racists.

While white nationalism looks to remain on the social periphery, by taking the phenomenon seriously, Swain sheds light on issues that badly need more discussion. While she fails to make a convincing case that white nationalism is a real concern, she does uncover raw racial wounds in the fabric of American civil society and offers a sensible path toward improved race relations.

The Christian Future

By Ross Douthat

Philip Jenkins. *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. Oxford University Press. 304 pages. $28.00

In the summer of 1998, the Lambeth Conference of the world's Anglican bishops met to consider a resolution on homosexuality and Christian ministry. The English bishops, along with their colleagues in the Anglo-Saxon diaspora, had been ordaining active homosexuals to the priesthood for years, and they took a predictably progressive stance on the matter. But when it came to a vote, the conference ignored their proposals and passed a resolution condemning homosexuality and declaring

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it incompatible with Christian ministry. The international voting body of the "Church of England," it turned out, was now dominated by conservative bishops from Africa and East Asia.

The reaction of the Western prelates to this traditionalist uprising was a mixture of condescension and outrage, exemplified by Episcopal Bishop John Shelby Spong of Newark, a liberal clergyman famous for arguing that Christianity must "change or die" to meet the realities of the modern world. Spong complained that the African bishops had "moved out of animism into a very superstitious kind of Christianity." He added, "I never expected to see the Anglican Communion, which prides itself on the place of reason in faith, descend to this level of irrational Pentecostal hysteria."

The story of the Lambeth fracas is one of the better anecdotes adorning Philip Jenkins's admirable and timely new book, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity*. At a moment when public attention is focused on the conflict between militant Islam and a largely post-Christian West, Jenkins reminds us that over the past century Christianity has expanded, quietly but dramatically, all across the Third World, becoming a truly global religion. This expansion, joined to the gradual withering of the faith in its traditional European enclaves, means that the long-term association of Christianity with "the West" is drawing to a close. In the future, Christianity may be better understood as the dominant religion of the global South.

The numbers that Jenkins cites are remarkable. Of the roughly 2 billion Christians worldwide, Europe still claims a plurality, with 560 million believers — although that number includes many who are counted as Christian only on the baptismal rolls of their emptying churches. If present trends continue, by 2025 there will be 633 million Christians in Africa, 640 million in South America, and 460 million in Asia; Europe's numbers will have remained constant, leaving it at third place among the continents and falling. By 2050, to extrapolate further, only a fifth of the world's Christians will be non-Hispanic whites. As Jenkins puts it, quoting a Kenyan scholar, "the centers of the church's universality [are] no longer in Geneva, Rome, Athens, Paris, London, New York, but Kinshasa, Buenos Aires, Addis Ababa and Manila."

Remarkable as this shift may be, more remarkable is the fact that it has come about largely in the past century, and even in the past 50 years. In Africa alone, the number of Christians has grown from 10 million in 1900 to 360 million today. In Korea, there were just 330,000 Christians at the turn of the century; in today's South Korea, the number is 12 million, roughly a fourth of the total population. In China, Christian missionaries made little or no headway throughout the nineteenth century, but since the communists took power and began to persecute religious groups, the church has flourished. Today, there are tens of millions of Christians in China, and their numbers are growing dramatically every year.

This "global Christianity" threatens to shatter the illusions of the post-Enlightenment intelligentsia, which has assumed for generations that Christianity will either disappear entire-

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ly or gradually accommodate its teachings to the spirit of the modern age. The Lambeth Conference is just one example of how this theory has foundered on global Christianity's moral and theological traditionalism. The church in the Third World has thrived demographically despite brooking no compromise on issues like homosexuality, the ordination of women, the acceptance of divorce, and the tolerance of abortion — practices that many in the West have either advocated or tacitly accepted.

It has thrived, too, while defying the assumption that modernity would eventually purge the mystical from Christian belief, leaving only the rational and ethical elements of the faith. Global Christianity is heavily influenced by the charismatic, supernaturalist Pentecostal movement and tends to eschew the formalism of old-line Western churches, emphasizing instead emotion-drenched worship, public prayer, mystical healings, and exorcisms. This is true of the mammoth independent congregations that have sprung up across Africa and South America — but it is also true among the Third World branches of traditional Christian denominations. In Roman Catholicism, for instance, the shortage of priests and the need to compete with Pentecostalism have led to the creation of huge, lay-led charismatic movements — groups like El Shaddai in the Philippines, which boasts 7 million members across the island nation and holds mass meetings that, Jenkins remarks, "look like nothing so much as a 1960s rock festival."

Reviewing its profusion of sects, its tendency toward syncretism, its avowed supernaturalism, and its apocalyptic flavor, Jenkins argues that Southern Christianity strongly resembles the early church in the Roman Empire. In ancient Rome, as in modern Africa and Latin America, Christianity was an urban religion, emphasizing the blessedness of poverty, the power of prayer and miracles, and the imminence of the eschaton. As Jenkins writes, "for Southern Christians, and not only for Pentecostals, the apostolic world as described in the New Testament is not just a historical account . . . but an ever-present reality open to any modern believer, and that includes the whole culture of signs and wonders."

"Global Christianity" threatens to shatter the illusions of the post-Enlightenment intelligentsia, which has assumed that Christianity will either disappear entirely or accommodate its teachings to the spirit of the modern age.

This contrasts strikingly with Western churches, where the New Testament accounts of miracles and divine intervention belong either to a vanished past or to the world of myth and legend. To quote a follower of one of the new mass African movements:

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"When we were in the synagogues [the European churches] we used to read about the works of Jesus Christ . . . cripples were made to walk and the dead were brought to life . . . evil spirits driven out. . . . We Africans, however, who were being instructed by white people, never did anything like that." Now they do.

This revival of the early church's spirit is remarkable, but more remarkable still is the extent to which it has been ignored in the West. Many do not even know that these Christians exist, at least in such numbers — and why should they, when the media's vision casts Islam as the defining religion of the developing world? Many more, like Bishop Spong, are somehow embarrassed by the fervor and traditionalism of Third World Christians; or worse, they are embarrassed by their very *existence*, which is after all the fruit of Western colonialism, missionary zeal, and other assorted evils of our less enlightened past.

Whatever the reason, Westerners have failed to come to terms with what may be *the* defining religious development of the next century. This failure is a practical one — Western denominations are ignoring fertile fields for gaining new members, and the Catholic Church, as Jenkins points out, is foolishly importing Third World priests (priests desperately needed in their home countries) to meet the needs of Europe and America. But it is also a moral failure. "When Jesus told the 'poor' they were blessed," Jenkins notes, in a rare burst of fervor, "the word used does not imply relative deprivation, it means total poverty, or destitution. The great majority of Southern Christians (and increasingly, of all Christians) really are the poor, the hungry, the persecuted, even the dehumanized. . . . When American Christians see the images of starvation from Africa . . . very few realize that the victims share not just a common humanity, but in many cases the same religion. Those are Christians starving to death."

STILL, WHETHER the dwindling Western Christians notice or not, the age of global Christianity is upon us, with sweeping sociopolitical consequences. The most obvious will be a revival of the long-running duel between Christianity and Islam — with fault lines not in Spain and the Balkans, but in the African savannah and the Indonesian rainforests. This battle has already begun in the long-simmering civil wars that plague Sudan and Nigeria, where Islamic attempts to impose *shari'a* have met with Christian resistance — or in the southern Philippines, where Muslim rebels like Abu Sayyaf make war against the Christian majority.

Jenkins argues that such fault-line conflicts will proliferate throughout the next century. In this, he consciously echoes Samuel Huntington's "clash of civilizations" thesis, envisioning regional wars driven by religious differences, with alliances forming and conflicts spreading as Christians and Muslims come to the aid of their coreligionists. He imagines an African clash between an Islamic Nigeria and a Christian alliance of Uganda and Congo, for instance, sparked by religious strife in a smaller nation like Cameroon. Jenkins also foresees a war between the Catholic Philippines and Muslim Indonesia, fueled by each nation's per-

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secution of its religious minorities.

Taken so far, Jenkins's account is plausible. But he goes further, as the book's title implies, envisioning a kind of recreation of Christendom, that nebulous, high medieval idea of a supranational religio-political communion. After all, if Third World Christianity resembles the early church today, then shouldn't it resemble the medieval church tomorrow? In the political wreckage of post-colonial Africa and Latin America, Jenkins sees "eerie parallels" to the chaos that followed the fall of Rome, when the moral authority and social capital offered by the church lent it power and influence that dwarfed that of any secular warlord. From these seeds, he imagines a new *Res Publica Christiana* emerging in South America and Africa, just as the first sprang up in barbarian-ruined Europe.

This sort of historical analysis is seductive but unconvincing. Religion and politics will doubtless be increasingly mixed across the global South in ways that would make any Western liberal uneasy, but there are seemingly insuperable obstacles to the South's widespread religiosity being transformed into "a true overarching unity and focus of loyalty" such as existed in the high Middle Ages.

To begin with, as Jenkins admits, the two regions that might join in such a unity — Africa and South America — are geographically divided and culturally disconnected. And even *within* the two continents (especially as South America has become partially Protestantized), a "lack of a common identity" is a defining characteristic of the new Third World church.

Again and again, Jenkins's book shows how individual mass movements, mega-churches, and charismatic sects form the lifeblood of Southern Christianity. By contrast, what characterized Christendom was *unity*, under the authority of the papacy — and while it expired from many illnesses, Christendom's demise began when that unity was broken in the strife of the Protestant Reformation. Admittedly, today's Catholic Church is powerful in Asia and Africa, but the overall spirit of Third World Christianity, with its emphasis on personal revelation and its bewildering array of sects and splinter groups, seems determinedly Protestant.

Jenkins might counter that the early Church was similarly disunited, filled with sects and splinter groups and heresies, much as Third World "Christendom" is today. But disunited as they were, the early Christians were subjects of a single empire, and while Rome was decaying apace, it nevertheless played a crucial role in uniting the warring factions of the early church. The crucial, orthodoxy-establishing councils, like Nicaea and Chalcedon, were called into being by the muscle of the emperor — and the pope derived much of his authority from the fact that his see lay in the same eternal city where emperors had ruled for centuries. Indeed, early Christian writers like Augustine often cited Rome's world-spanning empire as a sign of God's hand in history, since it served as a vessel for the establishment of a new, Christian order.

In Africa, Asia, and Latin America, no comparable political structure exists. The old colonial empires, which Jenkins cites as parallels to Rome, fell *before* the current religious awakening, and their vanished political structures

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can provide no assistance in uniting the bewildering array of Christian sects. Imagine if Rome had collapsed in the third century A.D., before Constantine converted and the Nicene Creed was hammered out. Does anyone believe that medieval Christendom would have been as united as it came to be?

Still more strained is Jenkins's suggestion that, under this new Christendom, Christianity might become the next Islam — that the West will vanquish the spirit of jihad only to face a new crusade. The Islamist war against modernity, while it shares some rhetoric with Christian critiques of secular decadence (just ask Jerry Falwell), remains the fruit of an historical experience that simply does not exist in the Christian South. There is no tradition of a glorious Christian past in Latin America or Africa, no vanished caliphate and no memory of the Crusades, and there are no Christian holy places that could be desecrated by the nearby presence of American soldiers. Perhaps most important, Christianity, even at its most overtly political, lacks the idea of a *shari'a* and a necessary church-state fusion of the sort that animates so many Islamist movements.

THIS IS NOT to say that both a new Christendom and a new crusade are not *possible*. As Jenkins says, repeatedly and wisely, the religious future is wildly unpredictable. But it seems far more likely that Southern Christians will fight secularism through suasion, not force, uniting with conservative Western Christians in an effort to re-evangelize the former heartland of the faith. Jenkins cites the recent example of traditionalist Episcopalians flouting their liberal leaders and placing themselves under the aegis of conservative African bishops, and he notes that many African churches now send missionaries to Europe and the United States. Such alliances between Western traditionalists and Third World evangelists are likely to become commonplace as Southern Christians rise to dominate the global church.

Against this trend, secularists and liberal Christians will place their hopes for the triumph of a more Spong-like Christianity in the ongoing modernization of the South, which — barring global catastrophe — will slowly bring Africa and Latin America the rising incomes and political and social freedoms that have, according to some theories, caused the secularization of once-devout Europe.

If that happens, we will finally discover whether modernity is compatible with Christianity, and with religion in general. The experience of Europe suggests that it is not. On what was once the most Christian continent, wealth, political security, and a common currency have managed to fulfill — or at least to muffle — the spiritual yearnings that humanity has always harbored.

Europe is not the world, however, and elsewhere the religious fervor of prosperous Americans and East Asians offers a different model of the modern soul. If Southern Christians follow their lead, they will enter a modernity in which the end of history need not mean the end of belief.

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LETTERS

EDITOR'S NOTE: Several passages in Josh London's "The Unlikely Imperialists," a review of Max Boot's *The Savage Wars of Peace* (*Policy Review* 114, August-September 2002), bore a too-close resemblance to passages in articles by Mark Steyn in the *Spectator* and Niall Ferguson in the *New York Times Magazine*. Mr. London does not dispute the similarities and is unable to account for them. Our apologies to Mr. Steyn and Mr. Ferguson, as well as to Mr. Boot and to all our readers.

What Works?

SIR, — "Research shows" has been a facile assertion of education industry hucksters peddling the latest fads for primary and secondary schooling. Rarely, when claiming research studies validate their program, do they list actual studies or elaborate on the methods used to produce them or any ambiguities in the data. The new federal education law, No Child Left Behind (NCLB), shows a clear and commendable intent of its bipartisan framers to reform that kind of sloppiness in identifying what works in the classrooms.

The phrase "scientifically based research" appears throughout NCLB more than 100 times. This is intended as the new commandment for school programs that receive federal aid: Thou shalt not put into practice any school programs that are not supported by sound science. But what does that mean? What should it mean? E.D. Hirsch Jr.'s thoughtful article ("Classroom Research and Cargo Cults," October/November 2002) could not be more timely. The progenitor of the Core Knowledge movement proposes a rigorous standard for education research. But is it a higher standard than NCLB recipients or enforcers will be willing to take to heart?

Recent discussion in Washington policy circles has focused on using the so-called "gold standard" of education research — random assignment of students into experimental and control groups — as the NCLB ideal. That would be a major improvement over the pedagogical correctness asserted in anecdotal studies favored by many schools of education. However, according to Hirsch, randomness is not enough. Results should be counterchecked against the insights that cognitive science can provide as to the root cause of the short-term effects that are observed. Hirsch gives the example of a small study of 32 first-graders that sought to determine whether it is better to teach high-frequency vocabulary words in isolation or in context. It found a slight edge for teaching such words in isolation. However, Hirsch points out that had the work of cognitive scientists been consulted, researchers would have found a clear consensus that both isolated and contextual methods ought to be used.

On a hopeful note, the National

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Institutes of Health has recently done a good job of reconciling laboratory and classroom research to identify what works best in teaching early reading (in a word, phonics; in two words, phonemic awareness).

Realism compels an observation that widespread application of Hirsch's exacting standard will be difficult to implement in the political milieu in which public education operates. Even incontrovertible reading research will continue to come under attack from those with a vested interest in the failed fad known as Whole Language. The proper role of the federal government in umpiring disputes over conflicting education research is a huge question in itself. Nevertheless, Hirsch sets out clearly what ought to be done if achieving the highest degree of academic productivity is really the paramount concern of the education industry.

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Reproductive Choice

SIR, — Peter Berkowitz's glowing review of *Human Cloning and Human Dignity: An Ethical Inquiry* was blind to the real issues raised by human cloning for the purpose of having children ("The Pathos of the Kass Report," October/November 2002). His biased embrace of the commission's recommendations and the shackling of American medicine and science through the banning of cloning for biomedical research was an equal affront to freedom.

The overwhelming majority of pundits and critical thinkers will trash the proposed moratorium on research cloning. However, few will note the total lack of any serious consideration of reproductive cloning and the absence of even one reproductive cloning advocate on the President's Council on Bioethics.

Banning reproductive cloning for individuals or couples who wish to use it to reproduce is a total violation of their reproductive freedom. It is equivalent to forcible sterilization by the state. Likewise, telling someone that he "must die completely" violates the religious freedom of those for whom it is important that their genotype live on into another lifetime. While such concepts might be beyond the comprehension of many contemporary theologians, they are at the center of a growing number of organized religions and belief systems evolving today.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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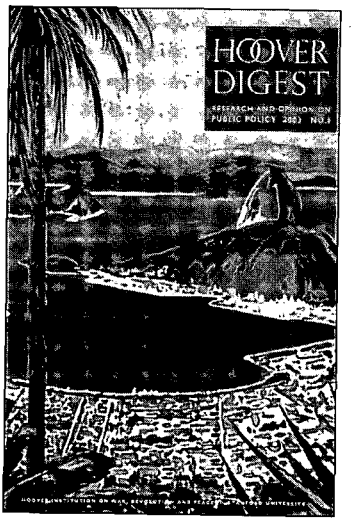

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